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17 December 1984

NEAR EAST/SOUTH ASIA REPORT

CONTENTS

ARAB AFRICA

ALGERIA

- Housing Minister on Construction, Urban Planning
(Abderrahmane Belayat Interview; ALGERIE ACTUALITE,
27 Sep-3 Oct 84)..... 1

EGYPT

- President of Consultative Council Discusses Group's Functions
(Subhi 'Abd-al-Hakim Interview: AL-AHRAM: AL-TAB'AH
AL-DUWALIYAH, 21 Oct 84)..... 14
- Emphasis in Cairo Civil Discipline Campaign Criticized
('Abd-al-Hamid al-Najjar; AL-AHRAM: AL-TAB'AH
AL-DUWALIYAH, 29 Oct 84)..... 20
- Resumption of Egyptian-Jordanian Relations Extolled
(Editorial, Ibrahim Nafi'; AL-AHRAM: AL-TAB'AH
AL-DUWALIYAH, 19 Oct 84)..... 22
- Official Discusses Housing Problem
(Milad Hanna; AL-AHRAM: AL-TAB'AH AL-DUWALIYAH,
22 Oct 84)..... 26
- Bread Subsidy Discussed
(Muhammad Isma'il 'Ali; AL-AHRAM: AL-TAB'AH AL-
DUWALIYAH, 15 Oct 84)..... 32

SUDAN

Muslim Brotherhood Chief Describes Nation's Islamic Program (Hasan al-Turabi Interview; AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, 22-24 Oct 84).....	37
---	----

ARAB EAST/ISRAEL

LEBANON

Al-Jumayyil Opposes Lahd's Security Role in South (AL-TADAMUN, No 78, 6 Oct 84).....	51
Israeli Military Policy in South Lebanon Analyzed (AL-DUSTUR, No 343, 8 Oct 84).....	53
Withdrawal of Lebanese Forces Averts Clash (AL-MUSTAQBAL, No 398, 6 Oct 84).....	56

SOUTH ASIA

BANGLADESH

Paper Reports Ershad Interview With ASSOCIATED PRESS (THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER, 6 Oct 84).....	58
OBSERVER Interviews Ershad on Elections (Abdur Rahim; THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER, 26 Sep 84).....	60
Begun Zia's Speech at 5 October Public Rally Reported (THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER, 6 Oct 84).....	65
Former Cabinet Minister Joins Jatiya Janata (THE BANGLADESH TIMES, 2 Oct 84).....	67
Foreign Affairs Adviser's UN Speech Reported (THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER, 3 Oct 84).....	69
Foreign Affairs Adviser Returns From UN, Saudi Arabia (THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER, 20 Oct 84).....	73
Foreign Affairs Adviser's Jiddah Interviews Reported (THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER, 19 Oct 84).....	75
Bangladesh, PRC Agree To Build 'Friendship' Bridge (THE BANGLADESH TIMES, 26 Sep 84).....	76

Paper Reports Indian Moves To Erect Border Fence (THE NEW NATION, 18 Oct 84).....	78
Text of General Ershad's 11 October Speech in Dhaka (THE BANGLADESH TIMES, 13 Oct 84).....	79
Bangladesh UN Delegate Tells Stand on South Africa (THE BANGLADESH TIMES, 16 Oct 84).....	86
Reportage on Journalists' Protest Over Restrictions (THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER, 16, 17 Oct 84).....	87
Newspaper Action Committee Opposition Views Noted Press Note Reported More Criticism Noted	
Mahbubur Rahman Resigns Party, Government Posts (THE NEW NATION, 2 Oct 84).....	93
Wife of Participant in 1975 Coup Talks to Press (THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER, 6 Oct 84).....	94
Muslim Leader Demands Struggle for Islamic Rule (THE BANGLADESH TIMES, 27 Oct 84).....	95
Population Control Falls Short of Plan Target (Hossain Khasru; HOLIDAY, 12 Oct 84).....	97
Writer Notes Economy Slideback 'Into Critical Phase' (Hossain Khasru; HOLIDAY, 19 Oct 84).....	100
Foreign Investment Proposals Make Little Progress (THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER, 19 Oct 84).....	103
Results of Indo-Bangladesh Delhi Talks Reported (THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER, 19 Oct 84).....	105
Land Reforms Ordinance Effective as of April (THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER, 19 Sep 84).....	107
Memorandum Signed With Indonesian Trade Delegation (THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER, 19 Sep 84).....	108
Amendment Removes Loopholes in Dowry Act (THE NEW NATION, 21 Sep 84).....	109

Briefs	
New Soviet Ambassador	110
Ambassador to Finland	110
Envoy to United States	110
Ambassador to DPRK	110
Commissioner to Zambia	110
New Swiss Ambassador	111
Envoy to Burma	111
Envoy to Papua New Guinea	111

PAKISTAN

Former Minister Says Power Shortage 'Result of Conspiracy' (THE MUSLIM, 21 Nov 84).....	112
Former Foreign Minister Advocates Islamic Bloc for Security (Aurang Zeb; THE MUSLIM, 21 Nov 84).....	113
Election Arrangements Said Completed (THE MUSLIM, 21 Nov 84).....	114
Bumper Cotton Crop Said Expected (THE MUSLIM, 21 Nov 84).....	115
Prominent Poet Faiz Passes Away (THE MUSLIM, 21 Nov 84).....	116
Briefs	
Riverine Police for Sind	117
Nur Khan To Contest Elections	117
Clarification on Meeting Pagara	117
Professors Threatened, Provided Guard	117
Hungary Offers Assistance	118
Minister on Haroon's Exit	118
Indian Ambassador Said Returning	118
Aid for Oil Exploration	118
Alleged Conspirators on Hunger Strike	119

HOUSING MINISTER ON CONSTRUCTION, URBAN PLANNING

Algiers ALGERIE ACTUALITE in French 27 Sep-3 Oct 84 pp 20-22

[Interview with Abderrahmane Belayat, minister of construction and housing, by D. Bouatta and Hanafi Taguemout; date and place not specified]

[Text] [Question] Mr Minister, can you give us a diagnosis of the sector?

[Answer] With respect to a sector as sensitive and also as critical as urban planning and housing construction, it would be almost impossible to give a short summary, and such a summary would not throw much light on the question. On the other hand, given the constraints of this interview format, if one understands the difference between a brief summary and a real, exhaustive, ample and detailed analysis, we may proceed--but it will still require some amplification.

So much for brevity. Now, as to diagnosis, one might do well to forget about the medical connotation the term has for nonspecialists, the idea of sickness, of poor health, the idea in short of pathology.

We must take your question in the sense in which the term is used in the social sciences, particularly economics, namely to ascertain, after thoroughly studying a situation, whether it is partially or totally good or poor and why.

In the same context, one finds the English term "check-up" which implies verification of the facts of the situation, and in Arabic one would say "fahassa ou fahs," in the sense of finding out, or examining, trying to arrive at understanding.

That said, it should be recalled that the urban planning, construction and housing sector has been subjected to a lucid diagnosis, and I am speaking among other things of the Fourth Party Congress of the National Liberation Front [FLN] in January 1979. The Central Committee in its third meeting of December 1979 launched a landmark study of the sector which was completed at the time of the Extraordinary Congress (First 5-Year Plan, 1980-1984), made public at the Fifth Congress and incorporated into the proposed 5-year plan for 1985-1989 currently under consideration by the Peoples National Assembly.

On a continuing basis, the government reassesses the pertinence and credibility of that diagnosis, draws conclusions, and commits itself to concrete programs based on it.

To appreciate the efforts that have been put forth as well as to understand current conditions, one must recall what we inherited in 1962: the pathetic carcasses of abandoned buildings, of useless equipment that had been damaged by the elements and left to decay.

In the early years after national independence was recovered, the private construction industry appeared moribund, and foreign enterprises had "abandoned their stations." We saw the sporadic launching of modest construction projects in far-flung places, an under-skilled labor force in search of employment opportunities that were difficult to find, a shortage of specialists, who were either inexperienced or still in training, frequent requests for housing that could not be met, and a budget barely adequate to provide for the functioning of the state.

Today, and for more than a decade now, but especially today, we see intense construction activity from Djanet to Naama, from Tamanrasset to Ain-Taya, from El-Kala to Tindouf, in major population centers, in the ports, the railway stations, the towns and villages, the rural areas, in Hauts-Plateaux, in the south, in the mountains. Thousands of construction projects of varying degrees of importance demand our attention, provide jobs, consume raw materials, utilize machinery and produce housing and infrastructure. A large fleet of transport vehicles and construction machinery combs the highways and byways, crisscrosses the map and links production sites to construction zones.

There has been constant activity year after year, especially since 1979, when the FLN Central Committee officially recognized and proclaimed housing a national priority.

Nevertheless, while the number of construction projects (housing and social infrastructure, schools, high-schools, hospitals, vocational training centers, cultural centers...) and the rate at which they are completed may have increased substantially during the current 5-year plan (1980-1984), there is still a serious housing shortage, which has not yet been overcome by the unprecedented efforts made in planning and implementing programs.

At the same time, we have seen a pressing and sizeable demand for housing and infrastructure as a result of demographic growth, the elevation in the standard of living and rising purchasing power, which requires greater and more rigorous mobilization of both our human and financial resources.

In attempting to realize these enormous objectives in the area of housing, the sector makes use of research and construction resources that utilize various technologies and a staff that is not as highly skilled as we would like to see.

With regard to industry, we can distinguish three juridically different sectors, not all of which are of equal importance: the public sector, including both national and local (wilaya and commune) publicly owned enterprises, [and the private sector].

It should be noted, in that connection, that the Ministry of Urban Planning, Construction and Housing today has some 120 enterprises under its jurisdiction, compared to less than 30 only 3 years ago, shortly before the organic

restructuring of the enterprises. This figure does not necessarily mean that this juridical sector is most important in terms of its potential contribution.

Also, there are nearly 6,000 domestic private industries of various size, as well as a few foreign companies whose role is restricted, temporary and limited in time.

Continuing along the same diagnostic line, observers, planners, and administrators...note that the urban system still remains to be defined, that the existing urban structure needs to be remodeled, improved, and expanded in a coherent manner through a series of measures contributing to the building, the restructuring and the renovation of urban population centers of various sizes.

With regard to architectural conception, with a few exceptions one cannot say that we have seen research and development of original designs; instead, one sees that conformity and standardization, which should not necessarily be synonymous with architectural poverty, are the dominant characteristics of our urban landscapes.

A large number of projects, housing units and infrastructure projects of a monolithic and impersonal appearance are being built more quickly now, but this has not cut construction costs to an acceptable level. Indeed, to the contrary, costs have continued and are continuing to escalate.

The quality of construction, as well as the esthetic value and the functional utility of projects in many locations--without distinction as to the juridical status of the builder--are quite questionable and in some cases seriously deficient.

To finish with our diagnosis, we must put the sector in the context of the national economy as a whole, since it is totally dependent on it, as it is in more than one sense a reflection and expression of it. Production, distribution and provisioning of construction materials, vocational and university training, public and private finance, administrative procedures and relations with the project directors, imports and monopolies, etc. are all variables that condition and often permanently handicap this indispensable activity: construction of housing, the urban environment, economic, social and cultural infrastructure.

These are several aspects of the diagnosis presented in summary form. This analysis acknowledges the facts of the situation, and one must keep in mind that it foresees change. We will certainly have to come back to the prospects for improvement at the end of our interview.

[Question] To end the housing shortage, you will need to provide 250,000 housing units per year, from now to the year 2000. At present it does not appear that we have even reached the planning target of 100,000 units per year.

[Answer] This point, which follows directly from the first question, illustrates quite well the scope of the housing problem and the substantial efforts that need to be made in terms of organization of enterprises to improve their productivity, which is still very far from adequate.

The figure of 250,000 housing units per year to be built between now and the year 2000 is based on the assumption that we will reduce the current occupancy rate of housing units from about 8 per unit today to around 6 by the end of the century, taking into account the necessary renovation and replacement of substandard housing. It should be noted, in that connection, and in an informational vein, that 70 percent of state-owned housing is more than 50 years old, and in addition that about 500,000 housing units, or close to 20 percent of the national inventory, are temporary structures, being used as habitations.

It is clearly obvious that achievement of such an objective, progressing from the present rate of 75,000 units per year during the period 1980-1984 up to 250,000 per year would require the immediate creation of a considerably strengthened and highly efficient apparatus of production, as well as financial resources immeasurably greater than those which have been allotted to the sector up to now, even though those appropriations have been very substantial in their own right.

Looking at the situation from this new perspective, we are led to reconsider our usual thinking about the housing question, which is based principally on the actions to be taken by the state.

In other words, the means of solving the housing problem necessarily involve more commitment and effort on the part of the individual in construction, within an organized framework which has greater control over land use and tenure as well as financial mechanisms, based on greater mobilization and more judicious utilization of domestic savings.

In that light, the implementation of such a policy, for that is really what we are talking about, of persuading citizens themselves to take the leading role in securing their housing and also to change the focus of the state's efforts, would require specific measures aimed at establishing a framework in which each citizen would be allowed to play a role in the search for a solution to the housing problem, a role that obviously would be commensurate with his income level.

[Question] Is better quality of construction compatible with greater productivity?

[Answer] I am glad you asked me that question, which seems to be both very important and very opportune. It is a real issue, because while current construction needs are enormous, the quality of construction is far from satisfactory.

Can we in fact choose between them? Would it be better to have more construction or to orient ourselves instead toward better quality?

In reality, and this is incontestable, the two goals are not in contradiction: quite to the contrary, each supports the other.

The ever-growing construction needs have led to the launching of vast programs in great haste, often motivated by the contemptible expediency of coping with pressure. Thus, the accent has always been on quantity, and frequently to the detriment of quality.

In the face of the imperatives of pressure and major shortages, poorly conceived and poorly executed projects have been accepted, and occupants have filled them.

Thus, a number of "bedroom communities" of mediocre architectural design have been built on the periphery of our cities, without provision of or plans for the most elementary accompanying infrastructure.

The concept of quality of course includes not only the intrinsic quality of the construction (respect for the principles of sound construction) but also the total framework of the project (principles of urban planning, esthetic considerations).

The execution of projects is characterized by poor implementation, mainly because of the low skill level of the manpower used, as well as the often mediocre quality of the materials and the absence of rigorous and continuous inspection procedures.

All these inadequacies are aggravated by a certain attitude of tolerance and an obvious laxity, and these in turn lead to additional expenditures for maintenance and needed repairs, while at the same time the useable life of the project is diminished.

This situation gives rise to the fallacious idea that the search for quality cannot be carried out at the same time as we meet our quantitative targets.

The objectives we want to achieve in terms of quality could be summarized as follows:

- respect for urban planning principles.
- well-considered architectural conception.
- respect for the requirements of stability and comfort.
- projects finished off properly and as thoroughly as possible.

These objectives will be achieved through new concepts, new construction techniques and new inspection procedures.

Quality does not imply the use of deluxe materials. Now that we have made our definition of quality, let us look at the relations between quality and quantity.

To achieve both quality and quantity in construction one must have an adequate supply of the following:

- financial resources.
- skilled personnel.
- materials and equipment.

Indeed, in order to move quickly, one needs even more complete mastery of all the elements involved in the process of building (design, scheduling, organization...). Mastery of these elements necessarily leads to construction that conforms to technical standards and thus is of high quality.

In order to meet quantitative objectives in construction, one must try to bring together the necessary conditions we enumerated, including quality, a better quality of life.

High-quality construction also implies the building of Algerian architectural projects that draw upon Arab-Islamic values oriented toward the Algerian family and the Algerian town. Thus the institution of architectural competitions and prizes will encourage the emergence of talent.

I am convinced that progress in urban planning, construction and housing necessarily involves taking steps that simultaneously take into account both factors:

- insuring the availability (in quantity) of the necessary materials.
- maintaining more rigorous control over quality of construction.

[Question] The policy of maintaining land reserves and building cooperatives seems to have departed from its initial objectives. It even seems as if the ZHUN [New Urban Housing Zones] have become deviant and are transforming themselves into individual building plots.

These problems, added to those related to illicit construction, will surely lead to wasting the nation's land endowment. What do you have to say about this?

[Answer] The establishment of communal land reserves with the decree of 20 February 1976 was an attempt to create real and juridical control over urban land, by giving the community a monopoly over all the lands within the perimeters established by the law and spelled out in urban planning documents.

The idea of new urban housing zones is an application of communal land reserves. The new urban housing zone is an area within the urban perimeter where development will be planned, coordinated, and controlled, in terms of single- or multi-family housing, with the associated infrastructure indispensable to well-planned housing. The ZHUN can consist of single-family or multi-family housing or both at the same time.

However, what is observed in many communes is the simultaneous or successive opening of several ZHUN's in the same urban population center, without any general coordination of these zoning areas, which frequently leads to the premature development of some large areas and the failure of other areas to develop, as well a dispersal of material, financial and human resources.

This makes coordination and control difficult, while giving the (false) impression of great activity, which may in fact represent only a waste of a substantial amount of urban area.

Ultimately, the effective and intelligent management of urban areas, at the lowest possible cost and with the smallest amount of delays, is a fundamental obligation of the communes and the ministry. We will continue to keep an eye on this.

[Question] According to an investigation whose results were published recently in the periodical CONSTRUIRE ["Building"], many enterprises in the BTP

[expansion unknown] sector are not producing at capacity. What can be done to stimulate those enterprises?

[Answer] The place and the role of industry, like those of the commune, are critical to our economic planning system.

With effective management of the commune and effective regulation of industry one has control over two primary levers of the national economy.

One cannot discuss the status of industry in general, or public sector industry in particular--and specifically the building industry--without bringing to mind the tremendously frustrating problem of the economic effectiveness of the tools of research and development at our command.

In our own case, we are ascertaining the facts and we envision a rational approach.

1. No building company, either public (national or local) or private, is fully and effectively utilizing its human, financial and material resources.

2. There are three juridically distinct sectors, which must be treated differently with respect to coordination and control:

- The national publicly owned enterprises under the jurisdiction of the ministry, which since 1981 have been organically and financially restructured.

- The locally owned enterprises at the commune and wilaya level, which are watched over by the Ministry of the Interior.

- The private enterprises.

3. All these enterprises dispose of substantial resources, but their utilization is neither rational nor in harmony with the planning roles that they have been assigned. A specific analysis of this aspect is now under way, and adequate remedial actions will be taken.

With respect to our plans, the three subsectors together constitute the national building establishment. We must pay attention to all of these enterprises. By virtue of the ministry's oversight responsibilities with respect to one of these three subsectors, we certainly take the most far-reaching interest in that one, but by no means are the other two to be neglected.

Along with the Ministry of the Interior, we have a broad supervisory role with respect to management, orientation, coordination and regulation of the local building enterprises.

With the help of CNAT [National Center for Industrial Training and Construction Sector Data Processing], the Central Administration, and in collaboration with the National Chamber of Commerce, we follow very closely the establishment and activities of private firms, attend to their grievances and coordinate. This is both in our interest and, at the same time, an obligation.

Encouraging the growth and profitability of the enterprises, particularly those in the public sector, is a constant, real and intense preoccupation, the results of which are terribly important.

This is one of the factors in the modernization of the construction industry and the economy.

Achieving efficiency in the construction sector, improving quality, and reducing costs and delays all necessarily require modernization of research and development, although that is of course not all that is required.

To that end, the public construction industry should play an exemplary and vanguard role.

Nevertheless, we know that industry, particularly public industry, is a fragile organism which cannot withstand too much disturbance or improvisation. Its economic health and its strategic position exclude any delay, any slowdown, or any imprecision in guidance, coordination and control. What we require, then, is a scientific approach based on solid analysis, unwavering determination to move forward, vigorous repudiation of laxity and mediocrity, the formation of a competent, highly-motivated staff dedicated to the public interest, and reliable tools for development, assessment and administrative supervision.

[Question] Wage disparities and the shortage of skilled manpower are particularly troublesome to public enterprises which are forced to follow the regulations in these areas. Is there a way to remedy this imbalance?

[Answer] The shortage in skilled manpower is a handicap for the entire construction sector and the economy as a whole.

Wage disparities conditioned by fluctuations in the national job market penalize the public sector, since those enterprises are constrained to conform to the requirements of the law. Private industry, by contrast, is less constrained in this area.

It is a very big question, one which is not unique to the construction industry; it affects the entire economy; the solution, given current legislation and the condition of the domestic labor market, can only come about through the establishment of a national wage scale and a classification of jobs. This has been the subject of proposals and specific regulations that have been offered by the Ministry of Vocational Training and Labor and by the government as a whole.

[Question] With regard to urban planning, the statutes are clear (PUD [expansion unknown], land reserves, building permits, development permits...), but they are not always respected, either by private individuals or by governmental organs themselves.

However, the law provides harsh sanctions in some instances.

[Answer] As soon as there is a concentration of housing, a substantial concentration of residential units and social infrastructure, there is a need for management, for making arrangements, a need to establish an organized set of rules and prohibitions and obligations to do or not do certain things...So the standards for urban housing regulations are not unrealistic or improvised, they are necessary for living in an urban environment, and they are established within the framework of a science of urban planning that is systematic and

based on thorough research, one that has been mastered and which has been in continuous evolution for decades.

In sum, all of us--citizens and authorities--should bear in mind that urban planning is not something optional. One cannot continue to violate its principles without creating disturbances, distortions, and threats to the appearance, the development and the functioning of our cities.

For our citizens to fail to respect the principles of urban planning, either knowingly or unknowingly, with or without the complicity of the authorities, would be like becoming habituated (or resigning oneself) to smoking tobacco, even though one knows that habitual usage of that "drug" leads to deteriorating health and very often to the destruction of tissues and vital organs by cancer.

Violations of the principles of urban planning, which have become commonplace as a result of acting on ignorance and have been encouraged by a deplorable laxity, amount to the ingestion, the inhaling, of daily doses of urban poison which leads to the disfigurement and uglification of both the external and internal appearance of the cityscape, to the deterioration and ultimately to the "cancerization" of the urban fabric, and those parts which are disfigured and mutated by ossification and unhealthy or unsafe conditions will surely have to be amputated.

But while respect for urban planning principles is both an individual and a community affair, an indicator of the degree of assimilation of urban civilization, with all its advantages and its inconveniences, it can be inculcated to a considerable extent either by education and consciousness-raising, or by coercion and sanctions.

As you can see, our mission is very broad in this domain; but it also implies the entire apparatus of education, culture and civic and political training.

[Question] Some 178 products or materials go into building construction. How seriously does their unavailability figure in cost overruns?

[Answer] Personally, I have not counted or identified these products. The number might be smaller or greater according to the technology utilized and also depending on the location and circumstances. Experts prefer to speak of articles rather than products, and they number them in the thousands.

You see, then, from the number, as well as from the variety and the diversity which it implies, how fragile and precarious the situation is within the construction sector, in a developing and insufficiently integrated economy.

When some of these articles are not available, the inevitable result is cost overruns in construction, but there are other extra costs that are as important and even more serious, resulting from poor planning, poor design, and mediocre execution of projects.

It is incontestable that these factors are all interdependent, and this is why a reduction of actual construction costs necessarily means dealing with all of these causal factors.

Right now, if we include in our construction costs the surcharges that are due in part to the causes we have just mentioned, we are paying for the failure of the construction materials supply system (either via imports or domestic production). This means rewarding substandard skills, irresponsibility, and waste in all its forms. It means paying a premium for poor design, poor organization, and inefficiency in industry; in a word, rewarding all the mistakes which (along with other factors) currently characterize the construction sector.

To demand reduced construction costs is to force the enterprises to get extra productivity from their employees, from their materials and from their organization.

If the state no longer agrees to pay a prohibitively high price for each square meter of construction, this is a rejection of mediocrity, laxity, permissiveness, with respect to everything related to the cost and quality of construction.

As the major source of demand for construction, the state has the ability to do something about it, to force its partners, the public and private enterprises, to reduce construction costs and make an effort to improve the sector, and thus the economy as a whole. We have received specific instructions to move along these lines, and we intend to take specific measures to do so.

[Question] Mr Minister, the state has made substantial efforts, which have resulted in the construction of tens of thousands of housing units; but everyone realizes that these housing developments--both the old ones and the new ones--have not been built well, and some even appear neglected and untended. What is the reason for this phenomenon and how can it be remedied?

[Answer] First of all, I would say that you are right to acknowledge that the state has made appreciable investments to remedy the housing shortage. It is an effort unprecedented in the history of our country. All citizens should thoroughly understand this, that the decision by the Central Committee to make housing construction a national priority has not remained a dead letter; it has been carried out in the field in all the communes, and this can be seen everywhere and by everyone.

However, as you correctly noted, this vast patrimony of new and old housing does not seem to be managed as well as it should.

This surely implies a failure which is not exclusively attributable to the OPGI--the Office for Construction Promotion and Administration.

Those autonomous financial and administrative management entities have continued to operate within the limits of their reduced staff and financial resources, to recover rent, to try to insure upkeep and maintenance of buildings and of an endowment which is growing each year and has multiplied tenfold.

In the face of such a situation, plain common sense shows the disproportion between the (immense) tasks and the ridiculously insufficient means at hand. Even the best administrators could do no more than record the damage [words

missing] is not irreversible, the problem is understood in its broad outlines. The solution will be submitted for the government's consideration.

Also, one should not omit the share of responsibility borne by tenants, co-owners and occupants for their negligence, their laxity, the wear and tear on apartments, stairways, green spaces, and balconies. I think that the inhabitants of housing developments will be willing to make a positive contribution if the communes, the Party, the mass organizations and the schools succeed in mobilizing them and raising their consciousness.

All that does not mean that the ministry and the OPGI are in any way less responsible to carry out their mission; they are fully committed to it.

The quality of construction, when it is good, saves costly maintenance work.

But in any case our agenda includes a re-appraisal of the current approach to administration of housing and will probably result in the establishment of OPGI's of adequate size and means which will be capable of understanding and protecting the endowment they are responsible for administering.

[Question] Presidential directive 13 stipulates that "there must be an end to thinking of rural development as a problem that has already been solved." Mr Minister, what contribution would rural housing make to the realization of that objective?

[Answer] The promotion and improvement of rural housing is an important factor for a better geographic distribution of the populace and for limiting the growth of the great urban centers.

The quality of life in our countryside depends largely on housing conditions, which are critical to reducing the rural exodus and consolidating the recovery of our agriculture.

From that point of view, it is important to make greater efforts in the field of rural housing and also to adapt ourselves to the diversity of situations and contexts throughout the rural regions.

In that regard, personal [housing] construction needs to be encouraged, but it also needs to be rationalized by new forms of assistance integrated into a nationwide program. At the same time, we will have to assure greater coordination between housing and all other rural development activities, in terms of jobs, programs and infrastructure.

[Question] Mr Minister, can and should the state also continue to remain so massively involved in housing finance?

[Answer] That is an important aspect, and your question is very pertinent.

Obviously, and as we mentioned and emphasized at the outset of this interview, the shortage and the demand generated by demographic growth are enormous and disproportionate to our development resources and our current finance capabilities and techniques.

That is why it is up to us, and our duty is quite clearly spelled out in presidential directives, to promote new methods of financing, by the establishment of a system of individual and group savings, both voluntary and mandatory.

The citizen, the family, the communal enterprises, etc. must make housing, lodging, a priority in their budgetary planning, just as the state has done for years. It is a priority that can neither be postponed nor ignored.

Joint proposals for concrete action will soon be made to the government by the ministries concerned, notably the Ministries of Finance and Planning and National Development.

Also, with regard to ways and means of development, especially in rural areas, we will propose other approaches and specific steps involving more detailed canvassing of the citizens and increased and closer coordination between citizens and the state.

In a short time a set of studies proposing a new housing policy will be presented to the government. This package encompasses all three aspects of the problem: urban planning, means of development and the construction costs which are functionally and necessarily linked to it.

I should be able to provide more details after the presentation of these two sets of proposals. It might be opportune to mention that the two sets of proposals are complementary to those dealing with the improvement of public works--improving public works projects presently under study and dealing with the subject we discussed earlier of reducing costs of construction, sound management of investments all the way from the preliminary plans to the maintenance and upkeep of housing projects, and of course including proper operation of construction sites and respect for standards of price, quality and deadlines.

[Question] A final word?...

Conditions in the urban planning, construction and housing sector are correctly understood, their importance is clearly perceived. It is now a question of making improvements and building on the sectoral development realized so far, and proceeding to the reforms and initiatives necessary in order to reduce and eliminate the gaps and obstacles.

The guidelines for such action are spelled out in presidential directive 13 and in specific instructions from the head of state.

In the framework of the next 5-year plan, we should increase housing construction, and this must necessarily be accompanied by the corresponding social infrastructure: it must be integrally planned housing.

With regard to urban planning, it is imperative to build functional, homogenous, urban developments that respond to the needs of a modern economy and a balanced society.

All the authorities and all the citizens should respect the principles of urban planning, both in their own interest and for the general welfare.

The state must and will relentlessly punish those who violate urban planning regulations.

The state will employ various means--such as the establishment of architectural competitions and prizes--to encourage the emergence of domestic talent and the creation of Algerian architectural work that draws its inspiration from Arab-Islamic values, values of the Algerian family and community. This will be a qualitative, esthetic and functional approach to housing and urban planning, giving special attention to the promotion of rural areas.

The national construction plant, which as we recall includes the national and local publicly-owned industries and the private sector industries, must be modernized by fundamental transformations in its internal organization and by substantial changes in its administrative and economic environment.

These lines of action are necessarily complemented by further research and programs to make significant reductions in construction costs in order to establish the optimal cost.

The financing of housing can no longer be exclusively the function of the state: the citizens particularly, but also to some degree the local communities and enterprises, must make a decisive contribution to housing finance through individual and community savings, both voluntary and mandatory. In that connection, and in accordance with presidential guidelines and the decisions of the government, there is room for private sector investment in real estate development.

In terms of mobilizing savings, the state will make its own contribution, which will be substantial, to the financing and development of public housing for the benefit of low-income families. The state's role will be oriented more toward design, direction, organization and regulation, rather than direct participation; without of course neglecting its fundamental responsibility, which is to see that the housing shortage is reduced or eliminated.

In sum, more organization, rigor and efficiency are required of industry; more discipline, participation and understanding of what is at stake is required of the citizenry. Housing is certainly a national priority, but henceforth it must also be a priority in the individual and family budget as well. This will be a very well understood priority, and therefore one that is achieved.

The state will impose strict standards, enforce discipline, implement sanctions and fulfill its responsibilities with respect to guidance and coordination, organization, financing and regulation.

The elements of the analysis have been pointed out clearly. We have examined them carefully. The proposed actions amount to a difficult but ambitious program, one that is within our reach; altogether it is one that leads us to predict further progress. Our analysis leads us to an optimism that is reasonable and securely based on the upcoming 5-year plan--which must and will be a work in which we are all involved.

PRESIDENT OF CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL DISCUSSES GROUP'S FUNCTIONS

London AL-AHRAM: AL-TAB'AH AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic 21 Oct 84 p 3

[Interview with Dr Subhi 'Abd-al-Hakim, president of the Consultative Council by Sharif al-'Abd: "Should There Be a Consultative Council or Not? 'We Must not Look upon Work Done for a Party as though It Were a Job in the State'"; date and place not specified]

[Text] The responsibilities of the Consultative Council are not the same as those of specialized councils; the presence of one does not make the other dispensable.

The imbalance between one's rights and one's duties must disappear from our lives.

The president of the Consultative Council says, "Our council is akin to the People's Assembly; it is its partner in the legislative process."

"The committee on parties does not have the right to refuse to accept the documents of any new party."

In the wake of the appeal that was made to reduce spending, people have called for the Consultative Council to be abolished. Others have called for that council to be merged with the specialized national councils because of the similarities in their missions.

Therefore an evaluation of that council's role was necessary, but that evaluation would not be a defense of the council. Thus, we interviewed Dr Subhi 'Abd-al-Hakim, president of the Consultative Council who is taking it upon himself to take part in efforts to reinforce democratic practices by presiding over the committee on parties and the Supreme Council for the Press. This is besides the responsibilities he has for the party at this stage. The interview touched upon other subjects that are now being discussed on the political scene.

Working for the Party Is not the Same as Working for the State!

[Question] Doesn't the position you hold in the party require a great deal of time, and isn't it consequently difficult to hold that position and to serve at

the same time as president of the Consultative Council and chairman of the Supreme Council for the Press?

[Answer] I want to make it clear on the one hand that I am only the acting secretary general. I do not yet hold the position of the party's secretary general. On the other hand, we must not view the work that we do for the party as though it were a job for the state. When one holds a position in the party one becomes engaged in political work; such a position is not the same as a position [in the state] that an individual would hold. When the party is a ruling party it is natural that, for example, not all those who had been chosen for positions in the party would leave those positions or that all those who take office will leave the party. If this were the case, how then would a party's government be formed? Any state employee can be a member of any society. Would he leave his job and devote all his time to work for the society [in which he is a member]? I was the party's assistant secretary; I worked for the party, and I carried out my duties in the Consultative Council. This is normal.

[Question] In the context of the policy of reducing expenses some members of the People's Assembly have recently called for a merger of those agencies that have similar responsibilities, such as the Consultative Council and the specialized national councils. In fact, some members of the People's Assembly have called for the Consultative Council to be abolished. How would you comment on that?

The Responsibilities of the Consultative Council Are not the Same as Those of the National Councils

[Answer] To answer that question it behooves us to become acquainted with the circumstances under which the specialized national councils were founded and the circumstances under which the Consultative Council was founded. The declaration of 30 March 1968 stated that there was a need for establishing advisory councils to the president. These councils would advise the president on various issues before decisions are made so that the decisions that are made would be ones that are based on studies that incorporate the opinions of people with expertise and opinions. When the 1971 Constitution was drafted, Article 164 of that constitution stipulated that national specialized councils be established. These councils which were to provide assistance in designing the state's public policy in all areas of national activity would be subordinate to the president. This means that these councils are advisory councils to the president. Accordingly, they are subordinate to the presidency. In other words, the relationship between them and the government is effected through the president.

The Consultative Council, however, was established in 1980 by virtue of a constitutional amendment that added a seventh section to the constitution. The provisions for the Consultative Council were included in the first chapter of that section. Anyone who reviews these provisions would realize that the Consultative Council is akin to the People's Assembly; it could even be its twin. It is its partner in the legislative process since it reviews laws supplementing the constitution, public plan projects and treaties. Furthermore, the Consultative Council looks into proposals that are put forth for amending one or more articles of the constitution.

All this makes it clear that the responsibilities of the Consultative Council are not the same as those of the specialized national councils. Consequently, it cannot be said that one of them makes the other dispensable or that it would be possible to merge them together. Debate procedures in the Consultative Council are parliamentary procedures, and council meetings are attended by ministers so they can take part in discussions with council members about the subjects that come up for discussion. The conclusions reached by the Consultative Council are not sent to the president only, as is the case with the conclusions of the specialized councils, but they are also sent to the People's Assembly and to government.

Egypt's parliament has two chambers: the People's Assembly and the Consultative Council. The parliamentary formula of two chambers is not unique. It is a formula that has been adopted by most countries of the world. In fact, the parliaments of countries with the most ancient democracies have two chambers, not one. This applies to Britain, France, the United States and other countries.

In addition, the two-chamber formula in the Egyptian parliament is not new in Egypt. Ever since modern parliamentary life was founded in Egypt in 1924, Egypt's parliament has had a Council of Representatives and a Senate. That formula remained in effect in Egypt till 1952. The Consultative Council now occupies the same building that was occupied by the Senate. Its sessions are held in the same large room where the Senate held its meetings. In fact, this large room is a historic one that was built before Egypt's modern parliament came into existence in 1924. The present Consultative Council is located in the same place where the Consultative Council on Laws and the Representatives' Consultative Council were located. These are the parliamentary bodies that existed in Egypt before modern parliamentary life was established in the country. It is odd to mention that the large room where the Consultative Council now meets is the same one where Ahmad 'Urabi was put on trial.

It is on that basis that we are stating that the Consultative Council is quite different from the specialized national councils. It supplements the People's Assembly and is akin to it in the context of Egypt's parliament. It would be enough to mention that Article 205 of the Constitution stipulates that the provisions of 20 articles in the constitution in the chapter on the People's Assembly are also to be applied to the Consultative Council.

[Question] How would you evaluate the presence of other opinions in the Consultative Council, especially since one third of its members are appointed?

[Answer] The opposition in the Consultative Council is represented by some parties, such as the Liberal Party and the Wafd Party. In addition, there is a number of independents. This is something that cannot now be found in the People's Assembly because one third of the assembly's members are appointed. There are about 10 independent members at least who do not belong to a party and who are registered as independents. There is no doubt that we do need other opinions at this stage. This requires that we create opportunities for those who have other opinions to voice their suggestions. Representatives of the National Party themselves may voice their opposition or express other opinions on some of the questions that are being examined where differences of opinion do exist.

This is desirable because there is a place where opinions can be thrashed out for the purpose of reaching a sound opinion. I am referring to the fact that other opinions are clearly voiced in the Consultative Council. Practice has proven that in the past 4 years.

Political Work and the New Parties

[Question] Do you think that political activity in Egypt requires the creation of new parties? The opposition had previously mentioned that restrictions were being placed on new parties by the committee on parties. What do you think about that?

[Answer] The matter has nothing at all to do with the opinion which holds that more parties are needed, nor does it have anything to do with the opinion which holds that the parties we have now are enough. This is because the decisive factor here is the law which has made the establishment of new parties possible. A new party may be established when at least 50 charter members come forward and present the party's program and its bylaws. The committee on parties would then consider the documents of that party whose establishment is being sought, and it would issue its decision either approving the establishment of that party or denying it. In case approval is denied, the committee's decision must include the reasons for the denial. In case the establishment of a party is denied, the charter members of that party can turn to the courts which have the final word regarding the establishment of a party.

The committee's decision then is not final. In case the committee denies approval, the final decision is made by the court. There is no stronger indication of that than the fact that al-Ummah Party was established by a court ruling. Al-Wafd Party also resumed its activity by means of a court ruling.

In the first place the committee cannot refuse to receive the documents of any new party.

Confusing Rights and Duties

[Question] In your capacity as chairman of the Council on Families which is responsible for social peace and which includes people who have expertise and enlightened opinions, how do you explain the phenomenon of the imbalance in the social makeup of Egypt? That phenomenon has produced new classes of people whose conduct is alien to our society.

[Answer] The Egyptian citizen is a good citizen deep inside. However, some negative characteristics have become stuck to him. There was a rapid social change in Egyptian society, and one of the results of that change was an imbalance between rights and duties. In fact people's rights have become confused with their duties and the [distinction between] the two is no longer clear. When Egypt's political growth began, people asked for the right to vote. Women got the right to vote after men did. Recently we began enticing people to exercise that right which has turned into a duty.

There are characteristics that have become common in our society. They are drawbacks that all party organizations must join forces to oppose. People are now

entertaining negative ideas. Some people think, for example, that a prominent citizen is one who takes the most and gives the least. In the past, however, we used to be ashamed of declaring at any gathering that we did not work or that we did not do our duty. People are bragging about not making contributions, and this is a grave matter.

Both the Citizen and the Executive Authority Are Responsible

[Question] Despite intensive efforts made by the executive authority to solve numerous problems, remedies were not realized in the manner that was required. Why is that? Do we need a new method for dealing with the crises that our society is experiencing?

[Answer] This question raises the issue about the relationship between the ruler and the subjects. It raises the issue about authority, a term, that has a constitutional and a legal connotation that goes back to the days of the British occupation. During World War I the British occupation was called the authority. That authority used to round up young men to work for the British army. [When a young man went to work for the British army], people would say, "he was taken by the authority." This notion of the authority persisted, and in some cases people did not realize that the notion of authority had changed. They did not realize that those who were now in power were neither occupiers nor colonialists but rather people from our midst. People did not realize that authority was no longer a matter of pomp and glory and that it had become a heavy burden that some individuals in this society volunteered for. The executive authority does not have exclusive responsibility for the authority here. Part of that responsibility belongs to citizens, at least in a preventive sense, such as for example, the problem of sanitation or traffic.

There are studies that are between 10 and 20 years old about the problem of traffic. These studies dealt in detail with the layout of streets, the construction of bridges and the expansion of roads. But there is a grave matter that is always being ignored: the conduct of drivers as well as pedestrians.

In a normal relationship between a ruler and the subjects we are all responsible. Egyptian citizens must have a sense of their responsibility toward their society. It is then that we can make progress and correct our problems in a more successful manner.

The expression about setting something on the right course is one that has become common recently. We use this expression as though we were running away from confronting a problem. We do not go beyond using this expression: we do not delve into its meaning, nor do we turn it into practical plans and programs. We spoke about setting the right course for bread consumption, and we all know how wasteful we are in our consumption of bread and how much we cost the state for the bread that is wasted.

Another matter that has also become common in our society is that desire to break the law. It were as though breaking the law and disobeying instructions have become acceptable and sometimes desirable. Sometimes, people even boast and brag about that.

Laws were written to regulate relationships between citizens in society. Everyone should obey the law so that stability can be achieved.

The Issue of Subsidies

[Question] The National Party is joining opposition parties in studying the issue of subsidies. There are those who are wondering about what happened to the fine study on subsidies that was prepared by the Consultative Council.

[Answer] The Consultative Council did prepare a report that may be seen as a basic working paper to provide guidance in studying the matter. If that report were to be used to provide guidance, one must take into account the fact that the present situation is somewhat different from that which existed during the period when the report was prepared in January 1982. Parties are now devoting their efforts to studying this issue, and it is hoped that the studies will be completed so they can be presented when the issue is debated at the conference that will be held [for that purpose]. We hope we will come to an agreement so that the course of the Egyptian economy can be corrected by making specific recommendations on the issue of subsidies.

8592

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EMPHASIS IN CAIRO CIVIL DISCIPLINE CAMPAIGN CRITICIZED

London AL-AHRAM: AL-TAB'AH AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic 29 Oct 84 p 7

[Article by Counselor Dr 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Najjar: "Discipline Vs. Order?"]

[Text] We have been hearing the word "discipline" a lot over the last few days, and the interior minister has adopted what he calls "restoring discipline to the Egyptian street" as a policy whose time has come, because of the obvious chaos in street traffic, on the part of both pedestrians and drivers.

The minister's announcement and efforts are limited to traffic in Egyptian streets, and in reality is only a partial application of traffic laws as they relate to street traffic. We would prefer the use of the word "order," and a policy of restoring order to society, since the society's rules of conduct and movement towards progress have disintegrated. We would like to mention some areas where we would like the ministry to bear down in order to achieve these objectives, which cannot be fully encompassed by the word "discipline."

The word "order," on the other hand, is broad enough to cover all its various ends.

One such area is the price problem and how to get the seller to obey the provisions of the compulsory pricing law for various consumer goods, be they food or non-food items. Furthermore, the deceit and corruption prevalent within society and various government agencies should be suppressed, and bribery in government, embezzlement and other evils must be confronted. These areas of activity are so beset by evils and vices that they have become a burden on society and a threat to its integrity. If matters continue as they are, it will become very difficult to eliminate personal interest. A government suffering from these ills will become incapable of carrying out its duty of bringing benefits to the people and protecting them from harm. The laws provide for combatting these ills which violate the state's order, but quite often the tools to implement the laws have been hesitant. The time has come to show some sort of determination to apply the laws in order to restore order to society. The same thing holds for tax evasion, which has also become a burden on society. A citizen finds it difficult to imagine how the elite could legitimately obtain such money. People's Assembly President

Dr Rif'at Mahjub once said something about standing up to the fat cats. The time has come to implement this policy. It is part of the order which must be restored to our daily life, to protect society from shocks we can do without. However, in doing so, the government must act within the context of Islamic law and democracy, avoiding coercion and force. At the feet of Equality, there is no discrimination among persons whatever their position. Taxation is one way for the state to achieve social justice, but the burden is almost entirely borne by public employees, the weakest segment of society, and deducting taxes from their salaries will not achieve any positive social end.

There is another issue relating to taxis, whose operations are regulated by the traffic law. It is not right that the average citizen can make use of these taxis only if the driver of this or that taxi wants to, and only on his own conditions. The upshot is that the client pays whatever the driver asks for, since the driver disregards the meter or doesn't even use it. The destination of the passenger has to coincide with the whim of the driver, who picks up other passengers, all of whom pay him the same fare. This combination of conditions makes it impossible to take a taxi without the driver's compliance. All of this is in violation of the traffic law, and hopefully the Interior Ministry will extend its activity in this direction, so that we can restore law and order to our daily lives. It is incorrect to say that the taxidrivers are suffering, when one of them earns more in one day than a senior employee earns in a month. A study must be done on this issue, for there may be some truth in what they claim. The ministry may be right in calling for the abolition of this or that law in keeping with what it is striving for. But open violation of the law at any time of night or day, in full sight and hearing of the police, is something which will tempt people to insubordination, disobedience and disdain for the state and the laws under which it operates.

There is also the matter of narcotics abuse and trafficking, a phenomenon which must be halted. This is one more part of the order which must be restored in order to protect future generations and our strength to build the nation.

We would like the Interior Ministry to be more noticeably successful in enforcing and revitalizing the laws in these and other areas, be they financial crimes or crimes against persons and honor. In other words, order must be restored to our society, and society must be made secure by confronting these various dangers and evils. Let there not be just "discipline in the streets," but a return of order to society.

8559

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RESUMPTION OF EGYPTIAN-JORDANIAN RELATIONS EXTOLLED

London AL-AHRAM: AL-TAB'AH AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic 19 Oct 84 pp 3,7

[Editorial by Ibrahim Nafi': "Recognizing and Returning To the Truth Are a Virtue"]

[Text] Our joy knows no bounds at Jordan's return to Egypt and Egypt's return to Jordan.

We are happy at the courageous step which has healed one unpleasant Arab situation and has opened the door to healing others.

We, people and state, are unreservedly happy about all of this. The people feel pride and glory because history has proven to all doubting Egyptians that Arab Egypt was above doubt and that its nationalist orientation was not under trial, since it had been tested throughout history. In every trial faced by the Arab nation, Egypt has always been the refuge, sanctuary, and defender from harm.

As for the state, it received recognition--and recognition of truth is a virtue--that its nationalist line has stood firm, before and after the trend to peace, and that its commitment to Arab causes and its defense of Arab rights has not changed, in spite of the doubts, allegations, and childish plots against it.

Therefore, there was a strong popular and official reaction to Jordan's brave step. The Egyptian people told their Jordanian brothers, "Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. You have overcome the pressures and threats of those who dreamed of leadership at the expense of Egypt. You have returned to someone who has never for a single day pressured to to accept anything which would not achieve the higher interests of the Arab people but which would merely satisfy regional considerations and dry "revolutionary" slogans that liberate no territory and restore no rights, but merely echo loudly in the ears.

Egypt's welcome for Jordan's step was crowned by President Mubarak's visiting and meeting with King Husayn. They shook hands and agreed to work to regain the Arab rights which had been lost by disunity, conflicts, and the absence of correct thinking on the part of the other Arabs.

In our surge of happiness at Jordan's return to Egypt and Egypt's return to Jordan, this blessed step reminds us of all those who stood alongside us under the most terrible circumstances. They did not doubt us when others succumbed to their real or imaginary suspicions. They did not lose hope in Egypt's Arabism at a time when others doubted it. History has proven that they were stronger than doubts, stronger than those who would sever the ties between us. They did not join the others in denouncing Egypt when doing so was a "sign of devotion" to Arab nationalism and a patriotic outcry which was a means of deliverance from domestic financial troubles.

They did not bow to threats and pressure at a time when others preferred peace at Egypt's expense, when official newspapers were saying that Egypt's fate was decided. They did not send assassination teams to hound us at winter and summer resorts; they did not send bombs to our capital; they did not trumpet against us at home and abroad. They said, "Let us answer those who are calling us to their side against Egypt. Egypt will forget what we have done to it after a while. It will forgive and forget and will even understand our circumstances, weaknesses, and shame in ourselves once, God willing, everyone comes together and the ranks are united. It doesn't matter if we are as evil as the others or more radical and revolutionary than they are; we know full well that what Egypt is doing is right, that it does not waive any Arab right or surrender any Arab territory. Indeed, we know that when it comes down to it, we shall never find anyone like Egypt to stand alongside us against those who threaten us."

Adversity makes the man, and the same goes for nations. We cannot forget those who stood alongside us in times of trouble. They were brothers when the other brothers had banished us. They were loyal friends when at every turn our friends were repudiating us.

I mean here the people and leaders of the governments of the Sudan, Oman and Somalia, who had refused to sever their relations with Egypt, and who refused to respond to pressure and threats, not to mention doubts. They did not cut the ties between themselves and Egypt. They did not believe what others said. They have gone on record as having a historic stand which Egypt will never forget and will always be grateful for.

Egypt will never forget the stand taken by these people. History has proven that the nationalist orientations of Sudanese President Ja'far Numayri, Omani Sultan Qabus, and Somali President Siad Barre are sound.

In fact, Egypt will never forget that Oman was the first to voice reservations about the Baghdad Summit resolutions against Egypt, followed by the Sudan and Somalia.

We will certainly never forget this. We will remember it always, and will be eternally grateful for every new step towards resuming ties with Egypt. We will also remember and esteem Jordan's return, whether this step is followed by similar steps in the near future, or whether the next steps are delayed a bit in order to wait and see. Egypt will never change its position or stand

on Arab issues, whether our brothers rush to return to the truth or whether they prefer to play it safe and avoid harrassment by loudmouths and adventurers. Once these persons "beckon" to them from afar that they have no objection, they will make a mad dash to take the step they have always wanted to take, which they were deterred from by fear of the consequences.

In this context, I ought to point out one important fact which deserves to be mentioned, and which any observer can clearly see in Egypt, from the government down to the man in the street.

This fact is that the Egyptian people have never made any emotional connection between the resumption of Arab relations and any possible use of Arab money for development or for solving the problems of Egyptian life.

If it should have spontaneously occurred to the man in the street that such a connection was true, he would feel that it had objective reasons, known to experts and specialists.

The fact remains that the term "Arab financial surpluses," which has been used quite a bit for the last 10 years, is not an accurate term now in the true economic sense.

Everyone knows now that Arab income, however huge, is just barely sufficient for development plans, and that there is practically nothing worth mentioning left over after the requirements of these development plans are met.

Everyone knows that petroleum prices have dropped, that petroleum price indices are continuing their downward trend, and that the Arab petroleum states are tending to tighten their belts instead of expanding and developing.

As is known, Arab money falls into two categories. First comes the money and deposits of the wealthy individuals of the region, which has been put into investments and long and short-term deposits in Western banks and investment markets. The second category consists of the petroleum governments' deposits in long-term investments in Western markets.

Therefore, those who own this money know better than anyone else that their return to Egypt and Egypt's return to them has no connection with any possible competition to obtain Arab money for development.

They also know better than anyone else that Egypt has no concept of "value" and does not follow that concept in its dealings with anyone. Otherwise, it would have accepted the US\$15 billion offered by the Baghdad Summit in return for giving up its stand, which would have regained Egyptian territory and would have opened the door to regaining Arab territory.

Also, if Egypt understood that concept better, it would have accepted, or at least considered accepting, the US\$5 billion which the Libyan colonel offered in return for some sign or hint from President Mubarak that he would give up the idea of a future peace agreement.

If we believed in the concept of value, we would have accepted all that, but we most certainly do not believe in it. We are not looking for value, but for Arab truth, the loss of which is embodied in Arab disunity and lack of correct action.

Therefore, we welcome Jordan's return, and we will welcome any other state's return to Egypt, now and in the future. Returning to truth is a virtue, and restoring Arab solidarity in the face of surrounding dangers is even more of a virtue and a necessity--now, tomorrow, or whenever the others reach the point of adopting a proper stand and fulfilling their Arab commitments.

8559

CSO: 4504/81

OFFICIAL DISCUSSES HOUSING PROBLEM

London AL-AHRAM: AL-TAB'AH AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic 22 Oct 84 p 7

[Article by Milad Hanna, chairman of the Housing Committee in the People's Assembly: "The Housing Problem: Where Do We Begin? A Step-by-Step Approach in the Proper Direction"]

[Text] On 5 March 1979 then Prime Minister Mustafa Khalil issued a decree forming "a committee that would outline a plan for a national policy aimed at solving the housing problem." The committee consisted of 19 members and a chairman who were among the best engineers and specialists in that field. Afterwards, the committee's recommendations were published in eight elegant volumes with an appropriate preface by Dr Mustafa al-Hifnawi, who was then the minister of housing. Now, almost 5 years have elapsed since that national policy was outlined, and I think that much of what had been hoped for or the prosperity that was anticipated has not materialized.

On 28 February 1983 Minister Mahdi Hasaballah al-Kafrawi, an energetic and patriotic man, called for a symposium to be held to discuss the problem of housing. The symposium was attended by most of the experts of the forementioned national committee. In addition, former ministers of housing, representatives of various political parties and some intellectuals who are interested in this problem attended the symposium. About 1 year later, or precisely on 18 February 1984, the final session of the symposium was held, and the recommendations of the subcommittees were read. The recommendations were approved by the symposium, and some members of the committee recommended that a board be established to follow up on the implementation of these recommendations. Others advised that these recommendations be turned over to authorized agencies which would select the appropriate means for implementing them. Some of these recommendations require legislation, and some require presidential decrees or decrees from the prime minister or from the authorized minister, depending upon the case. The Ministry of Reconstruction, the Ministry of State for Housing and the Ministry of Land Reclamation recorded the proceedings of this symposium and published them in an elegant volume. As Minister al-Kafrawi stated in the preface to that volume, [its purpose] "is to provide information and assistance to anyone who wishes to tackle the problem."

Engineer Husayn 'Uthman recently sent me another volume containing the recommendations of the National Party's Housing Committee to solve the housing problem. I found that most of what was mentioned in that volume had been published years

ago and could have been implemented. It is up to the committee to come up with ideas and to implement them. The problem, however, remained unchanged; in fact it became more complicated.

The U.S. Agency for International Development did not fail to give advice on this matter. Earlier, before people felt there was a crisis or before they became certain of its gravity or its depth, a two-volume book entitled, "Muqtarahat bi A'mal 'Ajilah lil Iskan fi Misr" [Suggestions for Urgent Action on Housing in Egypt] was published. The book was a joint effort by a team from the ministries of Housing, Reconstruction and Planning and the Office of Housing of the U.S. Agency for International Development. The team was headed by Mr David McEvoy, the American expert.

The U.S. Agency for International Development issued an extremely important and grave study about what it called "unofficial housing." The study, which was authored by Stephen Mayo and published in January 1982, is about the housing situation in Cairo and Bani Suwayf. The conclusions reached by that study had not occurred even to specialists in that field.

The study concluded that unofficial housing, that is, structures that were built without the government's permission or knowledge, provided shelter for a broad segment of Egyptians. Unofficial housing--let's use the more specific term of random housing--accounted for 84 percent and 91 percent of all the housing units that were built between 1970 and 1981 in Cairo and Bani Suwayf, respectively.

This is an astounding fact: that the people of Egypt are marching to their own tune and building houses for themselves without the knowledge of the government. It is astounding that all the construction one sees on the surface in al-Zamalik, al-Ma'adi, on the Corniche in Alexandria and elsewhere accounts for between 5 and 20 percent only of the new housing units. However, these housing units are utilizing 50 percent of the material and human resources designated for housing. But this is another question; it is the product of the seventies.

The president has recently called upon national organizations and universities to conduct more studies on this question. I think that now 'Ayn Shams University has some reports and studies. The Ministry of Housing, however, through the Organization for Housing Research and Planning, is making preparations for more studies [that are to be presented at] a conference. The steering committee for that anticipated national conference was able to obtain from almost all the countries of the world studies on popular housing and how to deal with it. It obtained these studies through the agencies of Egypt's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and through Egypt's embassies abroad.

All these reports and studies constitute an incredible supply of information. Anyone who has access to that information will have to come up with a methodology for solving the crisis.

It is also certain that this enormous amount of papers would make one feel dizzy. The housing problem in Egypt has been the object of concern, study and investigation even before 1974, but despite all these reports by Egyptians and foreigners the feeling that the problem is getting worse by the minute persists.

I noticed that there were provocative terms that were commonly used and that, quite frankly, I do not like. There are, for example, expressions like "a comprehensive confrontation of the housing problem;" "decisive solutions to the problem;" "to achieve radical solutions to the problem;" "a total, comprehensive solution to the problem;" or other expressions prescribed for us sometimes by the emotional method in which problems are dealt with in the media, in the press and in speeches. All these expressions are absolutes, and they run counter to the normal course of things. The housing problem is part of the nature of life which is changing daily. Thus, the housing problem is neither a riddle nor a mathematical equation that has a direct, clear and specific solution which can, once it is known or found, cause the housing problem to disappear.

There are many erroneous and widespread ideas about the housing problem. One of them is that the housing problem will be solved finally when all the government's projects, along with private sector housing, can provide an independent housing unit (at least two rooms and a living room) for each family in Egypt. This is a wonderful and a marvelous goal, but how can we achieve it?

President al-Sadat asked Minister al-Kafrawi to provide each family with a suitable dwelling that had a large living room with a view of a garden. That was a ruler's hope, but to the minister it was an order. However, turning that into reality is impossible. Egypt has a large foreign debt problem: the lowest estimate is about 15 billion. There are those who think that our foreign debt has reached 30 billion Egyptian pounds. Therefore, this goal of making high-level housing available to every family in Egypt will not be achieved in the year 2000 or in the year 2100. That goal will not be achieved even if we had the entire budget of the United States to work with. It would be difficult to provide the land, the equipment, the resources and the workers who would turn these resources and materials into homes.

I regretted the fact that the government's statement, which was delivered in parliament on 15 September 1984, indicated that "it would be enough to mention to this esteemed assembly that according to conservative estimates the growing shortage in housing over the past 20 years amounts to 2 million housing units. Construction of these units would require at least 20 billion pounds." This is a statement that may be made by a journalist who is daydreaming and who does not specialize in this subject. Such a statement should never have been made as a summary of the government's plan to solve the problem.

The need for housing and for upgrading one's home is a basic need that changes with time. Whenever people achieve a certain standard of living, they ask for more.

The housing and residential situation in Egypt is a manifestation of the situation of society. There are mansions, and there are huts because there are wealthy families whose savings are unlimited, and there are, on the other hand, hundreds of families without shelter or living in shelters that are not fit for human beings. It is a shame that all of us accept the existence of such shelters even though the magnitude of residential construction and investments in housing is unprecedented in Egypt. The average number of housing units built in 1 year rose from 40,000 dwellings in the sixties and seventies to about 160,000 units a year in the past 4 years. This represents all of Egypt's capability for building

homes. In my opinion, increasing the number of these units is neither in our interests nor is it desirable.

Accordingly, the problem is no longer a problem of building homes as much as it is a problem of building certain kinds of homes. These homes are to be built for those classes of people that have the greatest need for housing. At the same time, the housing problem is a problem of distribution: a problem of getting those who are entitled to those dwellings to occupy them.

I decided, therefore, that my objective was to alleviate this crisis and not to put an end to it altogether. It seems to me that plans which would be acceptable to most citizens can be made. Through these plans the housing crisis can be alleviated in preparation for eliminating it altogether within a certain period of time. That period of time is not to exceed the next few years.

Throughout its long history Egypt has never seen a complete, comprehensive solution to the housing problem. However, there was always a period during which the crisis would be felt. That period would be followed by one in which the crisis eased, and that period would be followed by a crisis followed by a period of ease and so on.

If we succeed in alleviating the crisis--as I expect and hope we will--the feeling that there is a crisis will disappear. Also, the side effects of the crisis will be diminished considerably. It is known that when people feel unable to provide themselves with housing or any other commodity, those who have the means would tend to hoard this commodity, holding more of it than they need. This is actually what happened. Scores of thousands of those who have the means are holding on to a number of dwellings that exceed their housing needs considerably. The problem of "locked dwellings" and that of numerous dwellings for a single family emerged. At their heels came the problem of dwellings that are deliberately left unfinished by their owners. These are serious and unusual phenomena that must be dealt with, but they will be diminished considerably as soon as the crisis eases.

I had closely watched the plan Kissinger followed in dealing with the Middle East problem to achieve his objectives and aspirations. This is the plan that has been called "the step-by-step method." Kissinger used this method when he began shuttling back and forth to bring about the first disengagement [of troops]. The Camp David Accords were the product of this method. It was by using this method that I began to get a grip on this mix of enormous problems: I would begin with one plan. A Chinese proverb taught us a long time ago that the journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.

I set forth a view of minor issues that appeared disjointed and incoherent. Put together, however, they would add up to something. I outlined each issue in what I called "a working paper," and each paper dealt with a specific issue that would alleviate the crisis of a certain group of people which may consist of one or several thousand or even millions of people. I did not take the most important of these issues as the subjects of these working papers, but there were two criteria that I took into consideration in setting the schedule of priorities for presenting these issues.

The first criterion was that of giving preference to those issues that concern the weakest people and those who had the greatest need for housing. People

living in shacks would prefer living in rooms, and those who live in one room would like to live in an apartment, and so on. That is, we would begin from the bottom and move up. We would do what we can do to raise the lowest standard of housing, and when our economic conditions improve, we would then gradually improve that standard.

The second criterion was to begin with the least controversial issues. Although society is divided right and left into different groups and social classes and although the interests of these groups and classes differ, there are problems about which there can be a consensus or something similar to a consensus. These issues then actually become national issues. The difficulty in correcting the housing problem--or any other problem--lies with special interest groups or with the so-called pressure groups who want decisions that serve their interests and increase their gains. For example, rent increases would serve the interests of people who own old apartment buildings, but reductions in rent or no changes in the amount of rent paid would serve the interests of the tenants. It would be in the interests of owners of condominium buildings for all restrictions to be removed and for people to have the right to dispose of them without restrictions or conditions. However, buying homes is not suitable for people on fixed incomes in the first place. They want to rent, and they want to pay an amount that is commensurate with their salaries, and so on.

Therefore, I resolved that the issues I would begin with would not be controversial. As much as possible, these issues would not involve the interests of power blocs. But I do realize that these power blocs will be coming with their money at a future time. An old proverb says, "When you take away bits and pieces from a mountain, it becomes less awesome." Therefore, I expect that as the working papers are executed and turned into reality, the crisis will be resolved from the bottom, and then dealing with the problem will become easier.

I am in no position to list all the working papers I have completed or all the other working papers I have in mind for the foreseeable future because I follow the British proverb that says, "Don't cross a bridge until you get to it."

I have actually presented three working papers to the Housing Committee of the People's Assembly and to public opinion. They are as follows:

1. For the Just Distribution of Government Housing: The aim of the paper is to abolish the lottery system and to lay down a system of preference points which would take into consideration several factors when applications for housing in the governorates' apartments, for emergency housing, for housing in new cities and different cooperative societies are reviewed. Those who should have priority in receiving housing are the most needy and the most deserving, not those with the most influence or contacts or those who are more capable economically.

2. Ensuring the Minimum in Housing for Tenants through Social Solidarity: The aim of this paper is to acknowledge citizens' rights for shelter according to specific standards of either one room for a family with one child or six square meters per capita for a large family. These standards should enable us to do away with the problem of people without shelter, such as those who live in shacks in the streets or in makeshift shelters improvised with sheets or similar objects. We could thus eliminate housing that is unsanitary or unsuitable for

human beings. We would eliminate such rooms where people live without windows or facilities. Furthermore, we would eliminate the high crowding and congestion ratios in places where 10 or even more people do live in one room.

To obtain the financial resources for this kind of "subsidized housing," members of the Housing Committee are considering increasing the rent for dwellings where the rent has been frozen for many years. The rates of increase would be reasonable and gradual, and the greater portion of this increase would go into a fund for simple subsidized housing. In addition, taxes would be levied on luxurious homes because that would constitute social solidarity among citizens of the same country.

3. Preserving Real Estate Resources: The aim of this paper is to correct the certain deterioration in the condition of buildings. The formation of residents' associations--landlords and tenants--would be permitted so they would work together in solidarity and assume responsibility for services and maintenance expenses for their dwellings. Many details about that have been presented to the committee. These will be clarified in the course of discussion and before they are presented to the People's Assembly in the form of new bills.

These three papers are not enough to ease the crisis, but they are merely a beginning. When they are completed in the course of this legislative session, we will advance one step at a time and move toward the problems of cooperative housing. We will move to housing issues that are related to industry and large units of production, such as what has been done in al-Mahallah al-Kubra, Kafr al-Dawwar and Hulwan and by the Kima Company in Aswan and the ministries of electricity and irrigation and other establishments.

There is a sensitive problem that has to do with dealing with the phenomenon of "locked homes" and that of hoarding homes, that is, acquiring more than one dwelling per family. And there is the problem of those dwellings whose owners do not finish them. All these problems have to be resolved. The committee has prepared a study of these problems, but that study will be presented only when the time is right.

Finally, what I would like to make clear is that the problems of any society are a product of the people's struggles, desires and aspirations. Accordingly, each one of us has to do his part and react to all the opinions that are presented. The participation of the people is the sure way to force officials to make proper decisions.

8592

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BREAD SUBSIDY DISCUSSED

London AL-AHRAM: AL-TAB'AH AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic 15 Oct 84 p 16

[Article by Dr Muhammad Isma'il 'Ali: "A Conversation between a Loaf of Bread and a Pen!"]

[Text] I started collecting my thoughts and invoking the Muses to get myself in the proper frame of mind that is necessary to write an article. That was what I was seeking by reading this morning. Then I felt that I would not be able to write before breakfast. A loaf of bread and a piece of cheese were brought to me, but just as I was about to start eating, I heard whispers that sounded very much like a conversation between two people. I was stunned to discover that the conversation was between the loaf of bread and the pen!

"I can see that you've lost your freshness and your consistency and that you are no longer round. Why is that? Why do you just lie there on the table in shame and sorrow?"

"My dear, Mr Pen, I have lost everything. I've even lost the esteem that people had for me. People no longer use my name when they swear. In the past the mere mention of bread and salt used to be enough, and all doors to human relations would be flung open. People would come to terms with each other and coexist in security and peace."

"But, my friend, Mr Loaf, although your looks are gone and your standards have deteriorated, you are still the center of people's attention. I wish I could have a small portion of the attention you get from the government!"

"Why do you envy me? You are at least the friend of intelligent people, and you deal with them only. I, however, have to deal directly with the seat of man's maladies: the stomach. I wish I had to deal with man's stomach only; but, my friend, I now have to deal with the stomachs of animals. I have become so insignificant and so powerless that I have sunk to the level of cattle."

"But my friend, I cannot imagine that the social standards of cattle have risen and that they have evolved to the point where they can eat bread! If that were the case, we will have to look for that day when they will eat basbusah, [Translator's note: crumbly Middle Eastern pastry made of cream of wheat, yoghurt and

sugar] cake, ice cream and grapefruit! But that will never happen, no matter how much economic liberalization we have and no matter how much money people make, legally or illegally. It seems to me that it is neither your looks nor the stomach upsets you give people that are responsible for your lost esteem, but rather it is your low price. You are associated with a value, the piaster, which has gone out of our lives. As long as the piaster has no value, everything whose fortune was tied to that piaster lost its value accordingly."

"My friend, Mr Pen, my price is not the reason for the low esteem in which I am being held. If that were the case, why is it, for example, that a 5 piaster newspaper has not lost its esteem among the people? When that newspaper cost less than 5 piasters, it did not lose its value in people's eyes."

"The value of a newspaper or a book, my friend, is not the same as the price that is written on either one of them. In precise economic terms that value equals the number of readers multiplied by the price per copy. If AL-AHRAM costs 5 piasters and is read by an average of 5 people, then its economic price is 25 piasters. In other words the books or information I produce remain unchanged and retain their characteristics when they reach people's hands. People use this information and utilize it any moment without complaining. You, however, vanish after the first use. You either dive in someone's stomach, or you slump in a garbage can!"

"Do you think then that if my price were higher, people would appreciate me more and garbage cans would be declared out of bounds for me? Do you think that cattle would not hesitate before devouring me as they do when dishes of basbusah or kunafah [Translator's note: Middle Eastern pastry made from wheat flour, yeast, sugar, nuts and raisins] are placed before them?"

"Yes I do, my dear Mr Loaf. Look at your friend, this author. He may think about throwing you in the garbage can because you are not good enough. If that thought does occur to him, he will not hesitate to throw you in the garbage and to get another loaf of bread. Why? Because the price of a loaf of bread is insignificant: one piaster. What does this piaster mean in the way people rate things these days? You know, this piaster's great grandfather, the pound, is getting no respect from people, and his grandchildren, the weak piasters, are almost worthless even to beggars. But if the price of a loaf of bread now were 5 piasters, your friend would think many times before throwing you in the garbage. Don't you know that the amount of money people have determines their worth? Yours too is determined by the insignificant price people pay for you."

"You are right, Mr Pen. I know about this value equation, and I can almost imagine that the government knows about it too, but it fears people's reaction. People have come to enjoy putting me down and taking me lightly, so how can they accept me again as a master in their midst? How can they go back to using my name, along with that of my brother, salt, when they swear?"

"This is what I do find strange. It is true that those who had gotten used to putting you down because of your insignificant price may rebel, but people do not understand the facts. They think that there are other resources that the government is unable to grasp and that it is choosing the easy way out. A few writers and politicians are doing what they can to suggest that to people. However, it seems to me that your problem is like that of the sick man [of Europe].

Do you remember him? Your problem is like that of the Ottoman Empire when it was undermined by those maggots who gnawed its parts and undermined its structure and rendered it worthless even to the Ottomans themselves. It was then that people of good sense and judgment met together and decided to liquidate the empire. I am not suggesting that you be liquidated, but I am suggesting that your problem be presented to the people because it is their problem as well as yours. We have to open our mouths and talk about this matter, and opening mouths is something that you know much about! Let everyone speak up; let all newspapers make their pages available; and let all radio and television studios be made available to people and all party debates opened. These discussions are supposed to go on for a long time; they may even last from now till the next budget is drafted.

"I am confident that people will sympathize with the government, not because the problem is the government's problem, but because it is the problem of all the people. It is Egypt's problem. Do you know, Mr Loaf, that if your problem is solved in an economic, unemotional manner, Egypt's entire economy will be affected and the government will find solutions to many problems, even mine?"

"Your problem, Mr Pen, is an easy one. People don't need you as much as they need me. People are concerned about their stomachs not their minds. Don't you read the newspapers?"

"I admit that it is normal for people to be concerned with their stomachs. That concern is instinctive, and its importance cannot be minimized. Interest in me, [however], is an acquired habit. I am an addition to people's lives that enriches those lives. In fact, my job sometimes goes beyond enriching life. I shape it! For example, I have the power to discover methods of putting food to good use. I can persuade people to set consumption on the right course. I can call for war and for peace. In other words, I can call for both death and life. Without me, my dear Mr Loaf, human beings would turn into cattle. But I do not deny that life cannot go on without you and that it can go on without me."

I was still drawn to that extraordinary dialogue, and I decided to take part in it. I looked at the pen and at the loaf of bread, and then I leaned toward them as though I were about to share with them a grave secret. [Then I said], "You did agree that like anything else, the value of a loaf of bread does not rise unless its price rises. But you did not agree on how the reactions of some people are to be dealt with."

The pen became restless. Moving closer to the loaf of bread it whispered in a voice that I could still hear, "Our friend is making matters more difficult. Your price, my dear friend, is 1 piaster, but you cost 4 piasters! As you know, the state's bread subsidy amounts to about 2 billion pounds. The subsidy that a millionaire receives is equal to that received by a grade eight civil servant. It is the government's job to make the subsidy system one that is discerning. This can be done only by removing the bread subsidy altogether. You will say that this is a crazy idea. But I beg you to bear with me [and to let me explain].

"Removing the bread subsidy will save the government 2 billion pounds. If the government can lay its hands on this sum of money, it can redistribute part of

it to all those who cannot raise their incomes on their own. Those are civilian and military civil servants, retired people, landlords who had to reduce the rent they charge their tenants, and owners of farm land who receive only small "payments" from their tenants. Those are the people on fixed, not limited incomes.

"If we assume that the number of these people is 2 million citizens and that every one of them consumes an average of 6 loaves of bread a day, then a family that has an average of 5 people will consume 30 loaves of bread whose real cost is 120 piasters--that is, 30 loaves X 4 piasters. If the price citizens now pay willingly for a loaf of bread is one fourth that amount, then the actual increase for each family will be 90 piasters a day--1 piaster X 30 loaves. In other words, a family's monthly expenses will rise by 27 pounds. If it is the people on fixed incomes, those 2 million families, who will be adversely affected by this, then [we should know that] the costs of increasing the price of bread will be 54 million pounds a month. In 1 year that cost will be 12 X 54 or 636 million pounds. Thus, the state would have to distribute 636 million pounds to these families only. These funds would be distributed at a rate of 27 pounds a month per family. This money would be disbursed as a cost of living allowance, and the state would still have 1.364 billion pounds left over from the bread subsidy of 2 billion pounds. This is what the government is paying now for the bread that is used to feed cattle and to feed the wealthy and those who can make unilateral decisions to increase their incomes, such as craftsmen and others."

"But my dear Mr Pen, you forgot about how the wealthy and those who can increase their incomes will react. I realize that my relations with cattle will be broken, and that they will never show their reactions. In fact, it will be the owners of the cattle who will have a reaction! But are you not forgetting that the man who irons clothes also eats bread? He has the ability to increase his income, and he can charge 25 piasters for ironing a shirt! A barber will charge 5 pounds for a haircut, and so on. The problem with prices is that they have a ripple effect like a stone that is thrown in still water. The water becomes wavy, undulating in ever widening circles that become very faint at the widest point of these circles. It is a natural law that must be taken into consideration."

"Yes, my friend, but these effects can be contained by educating the people and by utilizing the government's authority as well. People ought to realize that it is in their interests that prices stay where they are. Accordingly, they must understand that they have to be the prime defenders of that. But because the people have not yet reached that degree of maturity, government has to reconsider economic incrimination. We are facing circumstances which require that penalties be stiffened for those who tamper with people's livelihoods or those who try to tamper with prices. Opposition and ruling parties bear the burden of establishing this linkage between the people and the government or between the people and the law. A party that fails to protect the interests of the masses will be rejected by the people. People will expose the falsehood of such a party's allegations.

"My friend, Mr Loaf, your problem is a true test of one's patriotism. It is a true test of the government's ability [to manage people's affairs] and its awareness of the people's problems. The government wants to have people who are

happy, but this powerless government realizes what needs to be done, but it lacks the means to do what is necessary. And the people are holding on to the government that gave them a taste of freedom. But they are powerless too; they are preoccupied with their daily bread."

The dialogue came to an end, and there was a deep silence. Then I started eating my breakfast, but the bread was very bad. I got up to get another loaf of bread, and then I got another. And the pen chuckled and chuckled. Then I chuckled too, and I folded the papers and put away the pen without writing the article. I couldn't write because hunger had left me worn out!

8592

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MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD CHIEF DESCRIBES NATION'S ISLAMIC PROGRAM

London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22, 23, 24 Oct 84

[Interview with Hasan al-Turabi, Leader of Muslim Brothers, by 'Adil Salahi: "Dr Hasan Al-Turabi: Islamic Action in the Sudan Has Gone beyond the Muslim Brothers' Platform"]

[22 Oct 84 p 12]

[Text] The Sudan recently hosted the first international conference on the application of Islamic law in the Sudan. There is no doubt that the Sudan's experience in returning to the application of Islamic law is to be considered a pioneering one, now that the Arab countries have become familiar with different patterns of secular laws, whether those are laws which colonialism imposed or ones which were created after the departure of the colonialists. Therefore, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT met with a number of officials in the Sudan and dealt with various aspects of politics and society and the change in society in the light of the new system. AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT will publish these meetings subsequently, God willing. It is starting today with its meeting with Dr Hasan al-Turabi, who for a long time occupied the position of general overseer of the Muslim Brothers in the Sudan. He was also secretary of the Islamic Charter Front, and occupies today the position of assistant to the president for foreign policy. It had this interview with him:

[Question] The feeling that is prevalent among some people is that the Muslim Brothers are behind the Islamic orientation that the Sudan is witnessing now. Is that true, or is what appears on the surface the truth?

[Answer] The brothers created a military entity in the Sudan a long time ago, but they did not work in the areas of activity of public life since they were a party which excluded other Muslim, and not a group which was working assiduously with its own affairs. They always tried to work in a broad front which would concur on a specific issue with everyone who was affected by that issue. Therefore, they did not publicize their name, the name of the Muslim Brothers, among the people, and they never engaged in political activity in the form of a party. Rather, they worked in the Islamic Constitution Front and the Islamic Charter Front with a large faction of Islamic activists in the country. Even in the student area, you can see them

working in a broad front, the front of the Islamic tendency. Following the national reconciliation, they were content to work through the legal frameworks and existing policy in the country, which is a framework that does not allow for a distinctive political organization. They thought only of existing by themselves, and this was their political origin. As long as it was open to them to make the appeal for Islam and propagate patterns of Islamic conduct, they never established a public organization. When you utter the name of the Muslim Brothers, that does not symbolize a specific Islamic organization; rather, it refers to a broad intellectual current and a broad pattern of commitment to Islam. Some of the symbols of this current have continued to be referred to as leaders of the Muslim Brothers.

As for the manifestations of Islam which were active in recent years, until they reached the point where they became an effective platform for the application of Islamic Law, the Muslim Brothers in times past and everyone working in the Front of the Call to Islam, the Islamic Constitution and all the people who were active in the area of public Islamic action, get the credit for preparing the climate of Sudanese public life and they purified the country of irreligious political thinking, whether Western or Communist. All these took part in the current of the recent stage; they were headed by our brother President Ja'far Numayri, whose initiatives and personal convictions played a big part in leading the modern Islamic current and awakening Islamic consciousness, since he presented the Islamic platform for many years in the context of the public appeal, and the devout masses responded to him. He then subsequently proposed drafts of Islamic laws, and the legislative agencies supported them and the devout masses responded to them. The Muslim Brothers do not have a specific position.

The people who are concentrating on the Muslim Brothers in the discussion among us here are persons who want to restrict the issue of Islam to a specific party, so that they can provoke the zeal of the other political forces in the country, stir up historic loyalties and ignore what is common to these forces and the Islamic orientation, considering that it issues from a specific front. If they restrict Islam, it will subsequently be easy for them to lay an easy trap for it, but the Islamic orientation which exists in the Sudan is a broad popular one, and the people who are working for Islam here, with their various orientations, are all concerned with principles and issues and do not give much thought to persons, parties, names and forms. Thus the issue of Islam has become a popular one.

The fact is that if the people working for Islam in the Sudan had worked on the basis of the precepts of certain Islamic groups which prefer to isolate Islam and raise it above the society, which they consider pagan, it would not have been easy for this Islamic current to infiltrate among the masses, interact with devout temperaments, give birth to this broad popular force which makes a whole plan for the application of Islamic law possible and prepare the climate for the ruler to proceed along this path, confident that he would not provoke religious extremism and would not disrupt the balance of stability and security in a country in which Muslims and non-Muslims share, a country which is greatly influenced in its international, regional and world-wide relations.

In the Midst of the Society

[Question] Did the Muslim Brothers, then, view themselves as an elite, then choose or take as companions of theirs people who spoke for them? Was this the action program in the Charter Front or the Constitution Front?

[Answer] Not at all. That was an attempt on their part to live with their ideas among the masses and to melt into a broader Islamic entity. The more the Islamic entity expanded, the more that realized their objective in spreading Islam. They are proponents of Islam who want to offer it to the people and spread it among them without imprisoning it in their own framework, and they work for Islam. Their individual members want to be annihilated and martyred for the sake of God, and as a group they want to be annihilated within an Islamic entity which will bring about the desired Moslem society. That remained their platform in the past. Now, in the context of the unified Sudan, which is expressed in political terms through a single framework, they are the people who are most happy with this union. Therefore they have no separate organization. The Muslim Brothers, or the personnel who in the past had rallied around the organization of the Muslim Brothers, today do not constitute a discrete organization which operates in public life, but, if it is necessary to utter this word, they express a broad current which now belongs to all the people.

[Question] That is the fact of the question I wanted to get to. The Muslim Brothers always say that they are on the side of the ruler if he wishes to rule in accordance with God's law. In the Sudan we find a ruler today who is pursuing an Islamic orientation. Does that mean that the role of the Moslem Brothers ended as soon as the ruler declared the application of Islamic law?

[Answer] The declaration by the ruler that Islamic law would be applied is like the declaration by the individual of the affirmation of faith "There is no god but God." He has put his foot on the first step along the right path, and has become worthy therefore to be called a Muslim ruler and to have the government called a Muslim government, although the stages of Islamic perfection stretch out before it infinitely. One must understand from the word "the Moslem government" that it is a government which proceeds along this proper road; the role of the call to Islam cannot be eliminated just with the declaration of the Islamic government, nor can the role of the Islamic holy war be eliminated just by having it go beyond the first transition stage, because falsehood continues to remain as long as satan, who turns it backward, remains, and almighty glorious God continues to present the truth with afflictions which are borne. The truth must go beyond this affliction and advance every day, in its realistic representation, with each passing moment. However, the transition to a Muslim government might mean a change in the forms of action of the Islamic appeal and a change in its system and platform, without a doubt. If an Islamic society embraces the cause of the Islamic political course, there will be no scope, after that, for a faction to arise to the exclusion of others, trying to deviate from them and politicize Islamic action. People, of course, differ; there are people who have had wealth in the past, there are people who economize, there are people who are unfair to themselves, among them there are scholars and learned people, among them there are people who are sure of their religion and put their

trust in God, and among them there are skeptics who are still seized with doubts. However, none of these people constitute the vessel of Islam. The more the road toward glorious almighty God advances, the more Islam is propagated equally among all the people.

The Brothers' New Role

[Question] Therefore, as a party or political organization, group or any other formation, could we say that the Muslim Brothers no longer have a role in the Sudan, in the sense that with the application of Islamic law the Sudan has reached a stage which has transcended the Brothers' role?

[Answer] What there is no doubt about is that Islamic action in the Sudan today has transcended the old platform of the Brothers, because the upbringing of Muslims today can take place in the context of life overall, in the context of the natural state of social life, in the institutions of learning, in the mosques. Islamic culture can now be established via the public media and via the cultural movement of the people. Political action likewise does not call today for the establishment of an authority to put pressure on one area of the people, to try to urge them on to devotion to Islam. Everyone working on behalf of Islam will find broad scope to express the political values of Islam, wherever it has arisen in Sudanese life, and likewise the call to Islam is now available in all areas of life, holy war for Islam is available in them, and the transition from a lower stage to a higher one with each passing day is available in them. Therefore, the old conception of the establishment of a pioneering Muslim society, the old platform for its education within itself, and the old theories on its relationship with the society have all been eliminated by specific circumstances.

[Question] Do you consider that the Muslim Brothers in other Arab countries can, must, or ought to change their style, so that they can realize some of the transformation that is now taking place in the Sudan?

[Answer] The lesson of the platform of the movement of Islam in the Sudan is that whatever the traditional Muslim society might be, whatever intrinsic elements of paganism, tyranny and moral depravity it might contain, it still contains intrinsic features of the Islamic character which remain within itself, and it is most feasible for the proselytizers of Islam whose spiritual awakening has grown and whose intellectual awareness has become completed, and in whom the incentives of holy struggle have gained influence, to bring their effort and their appeal to this devout nature, so that they may act and unleash powers from it which are much greater than the movement of a small party. No matter who the rulers might be and no matter how its popular historic leadership might be, the nature will not have broken off from Islam in a way which would cause the individual to despair of it and lead him to believe that he should withdraw fully into what is old and build alongside it an edifice which starts from zero. The experience of Islamic action in the Sudan has proved that through positive interaction with the ruling authorities, indeed through positive interaction with the whole society, people or government, great bounties can occur. Indeed, this great bounty will be achieved with great economy in the powers which could have been squandered in the struggle.

The people of the Sudan, having given praise to God for the investiture of Islamic law, are most intensely grateful because Islamic law has been invested in them without costing them disturbance, struggle, fighting and martyrdom. It was invested therefore easily, because the appeal to Islam came to them spontaneously through their temperament, presented them religion through a happy state, responded to everyone who is acting in accordance with Islam, and discovered that the society will be built up by many good persons and that the regime itself will be built up by many good persons who are Muslim, if we do not declare antipathy toward them as one party would to another and if we extend our hand to them and become a single entity from which a great majority will join together and perform the burdens of Islamic construction. We are not advocating that this lesson be the only platform in Islam. To state that would be obstinacy, because all the circumstances of time have their own jurisprudence, and religion is fit for every time and place. Circumstances might arise in which the ruling authority will take a position closer to apostasy and spread out oppression over every manifestation of Islam, and in doing so receive help from a foreign tyrant who does not want the development of Islam to occur. Great aggression, tyranny and injustice might befall Muslim, and the movement of Islam might become prepared to be ready for the responsibilities of holy war. At that point, of course, God will permit the tyrannized and the fighting people who have been expelled from their homes to ward away this injustice and almighty God will defend them. However, a broad revolution might come about in the course of that, because it is necessary to mobilize tremendous powers to bring down falsehood. If this revolution occurs it will bring in calamities of disturbance and chaos. Even if the truth is triumphant, action in defense of the revolution will continue to undermine the stability of life afterward, and the revolutionaries will continue to be preoccupied with the struggle. They might not be alert to the need for positive construction, but might indeed continue to seek goals which their revolution and struggles aspire toward, and at that point it might falter with the impulsive forward rush of these Islamic powers in organizing and acting correctly in a precise manner, and come to resemble a storm which ruins farming, not a reservoir which stores water and from which channels then set out, being distributed wisely and carefully and becoming a source of life.

By this I mean that this pattern which has arisen in the Sudan is an Islamic platform which is ready at hand, and we must give it the opportunity to be tested and succeed. However, many people working with Islam have totally despaired of the possibilities of this platform, although it is the basic platform, the platform of Madinah, the Madinah of the prophet, on whom be God's prayers and peace, the one on which the society of Medinah, which the Koran calls the happy state in dealing with people, was founded.

However, [out of] irritation with recent history and the struggle between Islamic movements and governments, which were Western or connected to the West, and irritation with the position of the Muslim's scholars and their mystical alienation, historically, from the rulers of Muslims who were not as they ought to have been, irritation with this old and present heritage, it seems as if a large group of people have lost hope that anything except the road to holy war will work with these people, and, if holy war is not feasible, then at least alienation.

[23 Oct 84 p 10]

[Text] AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT is continuing its dialogue with Sudanese officials today. In his conversation, Dr Hasan al-Turabi takes up the experience of the Muslim Brothers in dealing with Sudanese governments and expresses his view on the importance of the practical application of the certitudes of religion, while working to realize general principles.

[Question] The Islamic movement in the Sudan has tried more than one way of dealing with governments. It has tried people's revolution, armed struggle and also national reconciliation. What is your evaluation of these experiments? Do you consider that if you had accepted something on which you turned your back things would have been different, and a people's revolution or armed struggle, for example, would not have happened? Would it have been possible for you in the past to pursue the approach you are pursuing today?

[Answer] We tried people's revolution in October 1964, and we were leaders of a people's revolution which ultimately did not become Islamic but about which, rather, there was a general consensus, and it became a national revolution. However, its leadership of the movement of Islam was such that the appeal to Islam was not given any scope at all at that time. The Sudan had recently been under colonialism, and therefore the appeal for an Islamic constitution was rejected totally by the first manifestation of liberalism. By the first manifestation of liberalism I mean the first national government. When the issue of the Islamic constitution was raised, it was rejected without justification worth mentioning. However, at the beginning of the May era, the Islamic movement, along with other nationalist parties, resorted to armed struggle to revive the people's revolution. It had appeared to them that the people who had taken power at that time were for the most part communists and that there was no way [to deal] with communists, they were people who had decided the issue of ideology on the basis of blatant apostasy, and therefore there was no way to invite them to talk together. In their political platforms they are not content to deal with a democratic platform, even if that is to make things easy, even with their apostasy, for everyone to operate in his own manner or in his own place. They then wait to see who will be the successor to power. However, they consider the opposition to be people who are only to be ground down with a minimum of human rights. It became clear to us that they were predominant among the guardians, and therefore nothing remained for us but to seek refuge in almighty glorious God and prepare to fight for the sake of God. Thus, we made one tour after another. When the communist tide faded in the country, and the quasi-communist tides which had been handing over the regime at the start of its term, the regime then made preparations for reconciliation and rapprochement. Our brother the president, of his own accord, started to show his Islamic face and his Muslim character, and after that to prepare the way for the platform of the Islamic movement to be transformed from a platform of confrontation and struggle to one of cooperation and mutual counsel in building up Islam easily, gently and gradually.

[Question] Does that mean that at that stage only struggle and confrontation were possible?

[Answer] That is how it seemed to us.

[Question] It seemed so to you at that time?

[Answer] Yes. Perhaps the government party largely lost hope that the Muslim Brothers might be a positive element in the building of the nation, reacting according to the image of the Muslim Brothers that prevailed at that time, which was that they were a terrorist, alien, destructive group. The regime was not prepared to interact with us positively, and we ourselves, viewing communism generally the way it appeared, were not prepared to deal with it. Therefore only what came to pass was possible as far as we were concerned.

Doubt and Certainty?

[Question] Many young people whom we could call proselytizers for Islam outside the Sudan are plagued by doubts. The opinion these people generally express can be summarized in a statement one of them made: "I will not believe that the Sudan or Pakistan can be directed toward an Islamic orientation unless I can see with my own eyes that Islam has come to be applied in full in the Sudan or Pakistan." Do you consider that such doubt is a pathological manifestation?

[Answer] Such doubt is not restricted to proponents of Islam; rather, the Muslim peoples in general have started greatly to doubt the truth of what is going on, because they have often heard claims being raised about Islam, and the intention to make an orientation toward Islam being declared, after which nothing happens. The fact is that the Moslem people, or our experience here in the Sudan, that the Muslim people in the Sudan did not become convinced that the application of Islam was real until they witnessed the prohibition of alcohol and the breakage of bottles of wine worth tens of millions of pounds, and when they witnessed the cutting off of the hands of thieves. I say not when the provision was written down, but when the execution actually took place. That is because these are the characteristics that gave prominence to a regime based on Islamic law. Many people consider that the most worthy thing in starting with the application of Islam is social justice, but social justice here constitutes a goal which does not end and practices whose results appear only after many long years, and you will not of necessity stand out from many of the numerous other beliefs which call for social justice and could constitute socialism. The same with consultation: you can apply a certain amount of consultation, but you will not be distinguished from democracy, and one will not be able to discern the ruler's intent to apply an Islamic system, on the basis of it. However, the ordinary person is familiar with the tithe, for example, in Islam; when the Sudan applied the tithe and sacrificed most direct taxes, such as income taxes and taxes on profits, which were relied upon for the government's income at that time, for its sake, he realized that the ruler had to be truthful. When he saw thieves' hands being cut off, that was a decisive act on the part of the ruler which answered all the doubts raised about Islamic penalties and all the excuses which had been bruited about in the past to justify them and make their impact on people easy, in the face of the Westerners' revulsion against this penalty; he realized that the ruler had to be one who relied on almighty glorious God, wanted to satisfy him and was not concerned that all of existence beneath him would be angry.

When the alcohol was poured out, the people remembered the sayings and doings of the prophet, on whom be God's prayers and peace, in Medina. These obvious actions are what have caused the people in the Sudan to believe. Of course the workers here who are Islamic in belief realize the Islamic orientation toward Islam and realize its background elements, and therefore they have perceived the truth of this experiment for a long time -- especially since they realize, with respect to the president, that he is a man who believes in action and does not use faith as a pretext for political success.

The Sudanese people believed when they saw these clear signs, and therefore it seems that there is no way to rise above people's doubts except through practical application.

The Positive Aspects of Religion First of All

[Question] However, what you referred to regarding the manifestations of application does not amount to more than limited things, such as cutting off thieves' hands and pouring out alcohol. Is this in itself proof that the regime is an Islamic one? For example, regarding the severing of a thief's hand, people might say that the Sudan is in poverty, is in near famine, so how can it start to apply this penalty? It would have been preferable for this penalty to have been avoided until there was prosperity in the Sudan.

[Answer] This is the complex of the cultural weakness which afflicted us in the past, in the days when apologetic thinking held sway. We made statements like that a great deal. It is true that when Islam makes property inviolable, imposes a strict penalty for commission of a crime against it, and appeals to people not to be seized by mercy for people who commit crimes against God's divine statutes, on the other hand it gives people sufficiency through social insurance and through the Islamic system, which advocates economic development and the provision of bounties for everyone, so that need will not provoke or prompt them to commit aggression against God's divine statutes. This is the exemplary notion, but it is preferable to apply the positive aspects of the religion rather than others.

The fact is that people who make the statement must apply consultation before they proceed to cut off the hands of thieves. They may perhaps want to postpone Islam to judgment day, because consultation is the most difficult provision in Islam and the first provision to be suspended. Most legislation continued to be applied until recently, so why do they want to deprive us of the application of all the positive acts which have appeared in Islam, and not just the severing of thieves' hands? We are in favor of the severing of thieves' hands. We have imposed the tithe, because it is an obligatory provision in Islam. The first war in Islam took place for the sake of the tithe. The Islamic platform which has been applied in the Sudan is not restricted to Islamic penalties; rather, it includes the tithe, which is on a par with the penalties and includes the prohibition of forbidden wealth, the prohibition on usury, the Islamic insurance system, and the law on all Islamic transactions, temporary sharecropping contracts, lease contracts, civil contracts and a system for loss. An effective attempt has been made to replace the entire constitution with its guiding principles, the system of

provisions in it, and the relations of organizations to it. The law has been issued organizing people's Islamic activity so that activity will not be restricted to the government, along with the law commanding virtue and prohibiting vice. The laws were issued on the Islamic nature of almighty glorious God's army, after it had been fighting on behalf of the nation in accordance with the best of religious obligations, religious education in it has become intensified, and the Islamic spirit has become the prevailing one in military activity.

A total turnover in the whole legal system has occurred. The principles of all the laws are now Islamic ones, in accordance with the principles of the judiciary provisions, in addition to the teaching system. In addition, the system of courts and the system of litigation has been changed; they all had been Western capitalist systems, based on discriminating between the weak and the strong, which is not the justice of Islam in any way, great or small.

Therefore, the platform which has been applied in the framework of the government has been a very broad one, and policies have responded to it. There are some things which cannot be applied by law, such as educational policy, the publication of the Koran and the ruler's everyday speeches to the people, exhorting them through the media. In spite of all this, it has happened that along with the government's movement toward Islam the people have rushed forward on a broad scale and their spirit has awakened. I believe that the faith that has been struck in the spirits of the Sudanese because of the provisions of Islamic law has a more serious effect than the provisions of Islamic law itself, because it is a reservoir of faith which will remain forever, and emergencies cannot befall that, because if faith is deeply implanted it will, God willing, remain in the spirits of the people.

[24 Oct 84 p 12]

[Text] In this final instalment of our meeting with Dr Hasan al-Turabi, the foreign policy advisor to the Sudanese president, the conversation deals first of all with the retention of certain expressions which are not in keeping with Islam, in spite of the Islamic orientation in the Sudan.

[Question] In spite of the Islamic orientation, the Sudan has still retained expressions which cannot be acceptable to Islamic feelings. The name of the country is:

The Democratic Republic of the Sudan. The name of the political organization is the Socialist Union. And so forth.

[Answer] This is the year of gradual, gentle transition. The old falsehoods, with many of their ramifications, remain mixed with the new truth which has reached them. However, with each day, the land is becoming cleansed, the truth is prevailing, and different aspects of falsehood are being eliminated. Of course that calls for extreme patience, especially on the part of many proponents of Islam who at the stage of the appeal were marked by extreme abstraction and extreme distinction between truth and falsehood, and always wanted the difference to be apparent. Indeed, they wanted the people

who possessed the truth to be isolated on one side, apart from the people of falsehood, and did not want to mix with people or with society, out of fear of pollution -- although the business of the Muslim is, if he sees evil, not to seek refuge and flee to the hills. I am not saying that that is not faith, but in the eyes of God the more complete faith, and the devout person who is preferred, is the devout person who fights, who, whenever he sees falsehood and evil, charges it, attacks it, interacts with it and mixes with it. Great benefit is derived from this mutual clash between truth and evil: "Had God not driven back the people, some by the means of others, the earth would surely have corrupted." Had the truth always fled and isolated itself, the way would have been paved for falsehood and it would have become widespread and tyrannical. The truth belongs to the truth in its rocks and remote places and in the spurs of the hills, until it does away with it. Therefore the transitional platform calls for this patience and this positive spirit at all times.

While the revolutionary platform calls for patience concerning holy war and martyrdom, patience is one of the pillars of religion in all circumstances of life and is necessary. Therefore, the name of the country and the name of the political organization remain, and many of the personnel who had imposed obsolete things still remain in place and sometimes act impulsively out of courtesy to the Islamic tide; if you isolate them all, you will help their devil with them, and they will lapse back into their old ways and lose hope of all good things. However, when they move with the cavalcade of Islam, even if it is costly and has a particular characteristic at the outset, their sympathy may perhaps move. If the whole Sudan repents before God, if dozens, hundreds and thousands of Sudanese repent before almighty glorious God at some stage of their lives, each of us, however implicated in error he might be, may repent.

Therefore, this transitional platform causes people to possess good and evil features, provided that their good features go beyond their evil features in terms of benefits. The truth is always brighter and clearer, and falsehood always falters and is defeated, with God's permission. This is not just our belief, as we read it in the Koran, but this is our experience in reality. Therefore, we are patient over the name "the Socialist Union." We have worked for a long time under its auspices, and have developed many complexes over this name, which we consider ignores the spirit of Islam, because in the demand for social justice it is affiliated with experiences which on the basis of this name are outside the historic Islamic context. However, through a positive, bold position, we have managed to challenge the essence of the Socialist Union, and, if the essence changes, the name will become a trivial matter. That day, God willing, the statements under which the earth was transformed will also be transformed. Sometimes, we are led to believe that it is possible for us to appropriate many of these names and words which had been imposed by falsehood and were a picture of falsehood, such as the word "revolution," the word "democracy" and the word "socialism," that we can appropriate all of them on behalf of Islam. The Koran was not revealed by a language from heaven; it was revealed by the same language which bore the meanings of the pagan era beforehand. However, it appropriated them and mobilized them for the worship of almighty glorious God, and the force was then other than the force of muscles: "The person who is strong is not

so through struggling; rather, the strong person is the one who controls himself when angry," as the prophet of God, on whom be God's prayers and peace, says. The rich person is no longer the one with great status and wealth; rather, the rich person is the one who is rich in piety. The watchword "Side with your brother, oppressor or oppressed," has become one of truth, not falsehood, and the word "usury" means not that a property owner should increase at the expense of the property of others but something else. The tithe now has become the tithe on money; it is subtracted, in accounting terms, from the owner of property, on behalf of others, but he is thus giving tithes. The words have all been changed and replaced, so that they could bear the new meanings. Words which are basically not fit to bear the meanings of Islam will fall by the wayside. The neutral words, those which were commingled all during the era with falsehood, will become commingled with the truth, God willing, and all during the era they will be signs of the truth.

The Question of Pressure

[Question] Do you consider the words "socialism" and "democracy," then, to be neutral words?

[Answer] Had the West today not had broad dominance in the cultural and media sphere, I would have said so, but I do not say so today. However, it would have been possible, had the Moslems today had political dominance and media and cultural dominance, for them to take the word "democracy," for instance, and express Islamic notions through it; if the word had been expressed it would have come to refer to man with all the other meanings of religion.

[Question] Could you, on the basis of the insight you have through your position in the regime, remark whether the Sudan has been exposed to foreign pressures to thwart action in applying Islamic law?

[Answer] Yes, it has been exposed to foreign pressures, but it became apparent to us, after the experience which took place, that they were less serious than we had previously estimated. I think that the international political ideology of the Muslims is no longer the absolute unificationist ideology that assigned all learning to almighty glorious God and all power to almighty glorious God and considered that the efforts of the man who seeks the protection of God are linked to the power of God. "God is pre-eminent over his affairs" and "There is no power and strength except in God."

You see many Muslims, not to say advocates of Islam, considering that certain international powers are informed of almost everything and that there is no confidential discussion among three people where they do not make up a fourth, and nothing greater or smaller than that that they are not part of. The octopus of espionage and Zionism has now been given divine characteristics, as if it is now informed of everything that takes place and has become the force which moves all of life. No coup takes place, and no development occurs, that is not attributed to it; even if the coup or development occurs in opposition to the interests of these great powers, it is said, No, a distant deception is behind that, and it is only meant to imagine that this

phenomenon does come from it. They have almost put these people in the place of almighty glorious God in belief. If they truly believed that no event occurred unless it was an expression of the power of almighty glorious God, and that there is no news of which God is not informed, they would have reduced their estimate somewhat.

We know that the Sudan is not the strongest Islamic country in confronting foreign pressures. Indeed, perhaps it is one of the weakest of them, because it is a country which in its economy relies on massive foreign aid and is also exposed to media pressures, because its own media are weak and its voice in the face of the foreign voice to which it responds is inaudible. Of course it embraces the problem of the south, which opens a broad breach through which influence can penetrate, in order to harm Islam and cast doubt on its justice. Likewise, Islamic political traditions in the Sudan are not so firmly established, because the eras when the Sudan had a plainly Islamic government were not numerous. The Sudan is not the strongest of countries. However, in spite of its relative weakness, and in spite of the force of the challenges which could have loomed over it, it has become apparent to us that brutality, in spite of the viciousness of the Western media and the papers and radio services, and the vow to make threats through economic pressures, that sustenance comes from almighty glorious God, who can move those who vow pressure against us to be content in any event to cooperate with us, because they have interests in our midst. The aid has not come to us spontaneously through the love of virtue among them. They have goals in assisting us, and when they realized that we were serious about Islam, they became satisfied with the state of affairs. They are very realistic.

We always estimate that the Westerners react to Islam more than they react to reality, because culture in the West now has become very weak. Material things are what govern it now, and there is no longer anything but a very minor residue in the Christian religion. Therefore, in spite of the residues of Crusader history and the colonial struggles, you can see that they are more prone to dealing with you on the basis of the piaster and interests; they will seek out limited interests with you. However they may hate your Islamic law, your platform in punishing criminals and the direction of prayer to which you direct yourself, nonetheless, out of the intensity of the concern to acquire what you have, they will deal with you.

It has been proved to us that they do not have such great knowledge and that they do not control our destinies. It is now said that these major countries are plotting against the Sudan and looking for alternatives to the regime in the Sudan, but I have come to have knowledge of many of these measures which are being hatched and I perceive the limits of their effect. I am certain that seeking the protection of God and relying on God are the sustenance of the devout person and that he can confront superior force with them. The Moslems, in their first origins, in the state of Medinah, were not founded on the most powerful of countries in terms of knowledge and media, the most powerful of them in terms of politics and army, or the most powerful of them economically. They were in a state of illiteracy and a state of economic and political weakness, but they sought the protection of almighty glorious God, sought the protection of the truth, and the truth is stronger.

The State of Affairs in the South

[Question] What are the most important problems facing the Sudan now?

[Answer] The Sudan's first problem is the problem of the southern Sudan. Colonialism left it in a state of primitive economy, and an obvious contradiction occurred between the standard of living in the north, bad as it was, and the very low level in the south. This inflicted a sort of tension on relations between the northern region and the southern region. Then, colonialism wanted it to grow culturally in a manner distinct from the northern Sudan, and assigned all education to the churches, even if it was the government that was supporting education. The educated people became Christians, and they were assigned leadership of the whole south, with its Moslems and pagans. Christianity in the Sudan embraces only 5 percent of the people of the Sudan, but by the force of leadership talks in the name of approximately 22 percent.

[Question] How will the problem of the south be solved, then?

[Answer] The problem of the south is not in reality a religious one. Rather, it sometimes exploits the issue of religious differences to express a feeling of economic injustice and to express a feeling of different racial temperament from the north. Westerners sometimes exploit it to discriminate between the north and the south. The solution to the problem is first of all to make efforts to develop the south, the solution second of all is to make efforts to build an economic structure which will connect the southern society to the northern one, so that people may be connected and mixed and the distinctive racial differences will be eliminated, and the solution third of all is to make a call to Islam, so that it may attract the pagans. I consider that it will also attract the Christians, because on many occasions they come from Moslem families and because they have not reacted with a fanatic Christianity against Islam. Therefore, they can be open to the appeal to Islam.

If we do not do that, the south, with all these elements -- distinctive race, backward economy, affiliation with Africa, then affiliation with Christianity, and, after that, cultural affiliation with Europe -- will then come to have a deterrent barrier in the face of Arab Islamic culture. This is how some colonial circles previously wanted things for the south. If the Sudan is cut off from central Africa, it will have lost many brothers and aid from the resurgent movement of Islam in all the countries of central Africa will have been cut off. The Sudan is an outlet of Arabhood and Islam.

Had our brother Arabs viewed the events of the world in a long-range strategic way, that would have been very beneficial for them in working to spread about the Arabic language, which is something they do not dispute over the way they dispute over every political position, and the money they spent on it would not have gone to waste the way money goes to waste on many other projects. Had our Moslem Arab brothers, or Arabs with an Islamic temperament, realized the need for the appeal to Islam and the ease of spreading Islam in Africa, they would have spent some money so that lofty mosques could be built there, for the sake of spreading the appeal to Islam. This is the problem of the south in the Sudan.

The second problem is that of the Sudanese economy, because we fear that due to the Sudan's weakness, there will be things that will expose it to dissension from increasing foreign pressures. Many of the people who are not guided by faith are worried about that and are afraid that people will kidnap them from the land, because they have continued to apply Islamic law. However much we have exhorted people who are guided by faith to seek protection from God and be patient and wait until sustenance comes from God, that is a promise which is derived from the application of Islamic law, and we must alleviate the occurrence of dissension among the Sudanese in general and among individual Sudanese who are preoccupied by the necessary requirements of making a living from thinking about a general mission of Islam and the construction of an Islamic civilization. These are the higher notions which we want to impose on them. Indeed, the devil might entice them, as a consequence of this need, to succumb to what is forbidden, in the form of bribery and theft, in spite of Islamic penalties and Islamic upbringing.

Therefore, resurgence in the Sudan has become a necessary precondition for the consummation of the religion there. Of course it would have been possible for Arab money to be invested in the Sudan, especially in the new climate in which all taxes have been placed, all of them having been removed except the tithe.

[Question] Many people might ask what proselytizers for Islam such as Hasan al-Turabi are doing about foreign political affairs, which are based on diplomatic protocol and the like. How do you view your activity in this?

[Answer] I am not active in foreign affairs and I do not engage in diplomacy at all. Rather, I came to take part in the Sudan's foreign strategy and came in at a specific stage during which the Sudan had assumed an Islamic appearance. We estimated that that would provoke many reactions among Moslems and non-Moslems in the foreign context. Most of the work I do is exhortation, for the sake not of theoretical Islam but the Sudanese Islamic plan abroad. I travel, give lectures, receive journalists, diplomats, scholars and political figures from abroad and speak to them about Islam in general and the picture which the Sudan has applied in particular. I also tour about countries to explain the campaigns of Islamic legislation and Islamic goals. I practice the proselytization of Islam 100 percent. This is my entire function. I am almost not free for any other activity that you would imagine would attach to me because of the name or because of the position.

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CS0: 4504/48

AL-JUMAYYIL OPPOSES LAHD'S SECURITY ROLE IN SOUTH

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 78, 6 Oct 84 pp 5-6

[Article: "Al-Jumayyil Opposed Lahd Assuming Security in The South"]

[Text] Informed Lebanese sources told AL-TADAMUN that Lebanese President Shaykh Amin al-Jumayyil strongly opposed Article IV of the Israeli withdrawal plan proposed by U.S. Middle East envoy Richard Murphy providing that retired Maj Gen Antoine Lahd maintain security in the area from which Israel plans to withdraw.

The Lebanese president declared that the government was ready to place the legitimate Lebanese army on alert for deployment in the south immediately following the Israeli withdrawal. He was annoyed by the U.S. envoy's remark about the army's ability, at least at present, to assume such a burden.

Ministers Junblatt and Birri joined the Lebanese president in opposing this point.

These sources confirmed that Murphy had obtained Israel's approval of this article before bringing it to the negotiating table with the Lebanese president.

The American plan, according to what these sources told AL-TADAMUN, provides for the following seven points:

- 1--Unconditional Israeli withdrawal, not simultaneous with Syrian withdrawal.
- 2--Damascus' commitment to maintaining security and preventing Palestinian fedayeen infiltration into the south.
- 3--Reinforcement of the UNIFIL forces and expansion of its role.
- 4--Coordination of operations between the southern army under the command of Antoine Lahd and the UNIFIL forces.
- 5--Indirect Lebanese-Israeli negotiations during which the Lebanese government would pledge to draw up security measures in coordination with Syria to maintain Galilee's security.

6--The Lebanese government must obtain Israel's prior approval for any Lebanese army unit going into the south.

7--Tel Aviv's pledge to complete its withdrawal within 6 months from the date of the agreement.

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CSO: 4404/51

ISRAELI MILITARY POLICY IN SOUTH LEBANON ANALYZED

London AL-DUSTUR in Arabic No 343, 8 Oct 84 pp 24-26

[Article: "Authority in South Lebanon Between 'Tzahal' and 'Tzadal,' Lahd Army in Lebanon"]

[Text] Perhaps the sharp resemblance between the Hebrew term, "Tsahal," the acronym for "Tzva Hagana Lisrael," which means the Israeli Defense army, and "Tzadal," the acronym for "Tsva Drom Levanon," which means Army of Southern Lebanon, did not come from nowhere, but rather joins several other similarities such as the organization, role, duties and activities of the "comrades in arms" in south Lebanon. This is brought about by the fact that "Tzadal," as the Israeli sources call it, under the command of Gen Antoine Lahd, is tantamount to a battalion of "Tzahal." The important thing is that the Israeli officers recently began assigning principal duties to the "Tzadal" soldiers along the confrontation lines in south Lebanon in order to stop further losses among Israeli troops and in preparation for their withdrawal.

The most important questions posed by the Israeli military staff command concerning the future of south Lebanon and the military situation there are represented in the following: "Will the Tzadal forces, namely the South Lebanon Army, be able to control south Lebanon after the withdrawal of Israeli forces and therefore assure the security of the Jewish settlements in northern Israel? The fact is that, notwithstanding the existence of two differing viewpoints in this regard, both viewpoints are characterized by negativism toward the future and the mission of the South Lebanon Army. Some Israeli leaders who support this army see a necessity to turn over to it a buffer zone in south Lebanon because it is Israel's "only hope" for withdrawing its troops from the Lebanese "quagmire." These leaders are trying to support their position by presenting examples of operations undertaken by "Tzadal" elements against the national resistance in the south and their attempts to terrorize the population there. Other leaders doubt the "Tzadal" forces' readiness to carry out the "security" missions assigned them following the withdrawal of the "Tzahal" forces. They believe that some of the inhabitants in the south who joined the "Tzadal" ranks were driven by two main factors, namely money and the possession of personal arms. Like the advocates of the first viewpoint, they too present several facts to substantiate their position, such as the time a full South Lebanon Army battalion laid down its arms and went home to protest the failure to pay their salaries, and the time when the soldiers beat up their commanding officer because their lunch was late!

It never occurred to the leaders of the recent Labor government before the Likud came to power--particularly Shimon Peres and Yitzhaq Rabin--who found Sa'd Haddad 8 years ago, that the plan they had built on the "puppet leader," as Ben-Gurion described him in the Moshe Sharet memoirs, has become their "only hope," following their return to power, for withdrawal from Lebanon while "saving face." In this regard, some Labor parties in the new coalition government are trying to blame the former Likud government for its involvement in the invasion of Lebanon and the subsequent abrogation of the Lebanese-Israeli agreement that included a provision for establishing a special military unit to supervise security in south Lebanon as part of a plan calling for the deployment of the Lebanese army in sensitive areas. Add to that the death of Sa'd Haddad, considered by some Israeli military officials "more knowledgeable in the complexities of the situation in south Lebanon and more tractable" than his successor, Antoine Lahd.

Lahd's family had lived in Marj 'Uyun, the headquarters of the Army of Southern Lebanon forces, in 1948 before he moved to Beirut where he was graduated from the Lebanese Military Academy in 1952. In 1957, he enrolled in the Higher Academy for Military Studies in France and returned in the late fifties to serve in the ranks of the Lebanese forces stationed in the south, where he received several promotions, becoming the commander of the south Lebanon area. He returned to Beirut 15 years later to join the Lebanese general staff. In 1975, at the height of the internal strife in Lebanon, he was appointed commander of the Lebanese army in the eastern sector of the Biqa' Valley. Several years later, he went back to Beirut to head the military intelligence agency where he used his new position to win the post of Lebanese army chief of general staff. His efforts failed, however, resulting in his resignation last May from the Lebanese military service to join his new military service which is Lebanese in name and Israeli in deed.

Since his appointment as commander of the Army of Southern Lebanon forces, Lahd has openly declared his intention to realize two main objectives: to raise the number of his troops from 2,069, the present size of the "Tzadal" forces, to 5,000, and to establish numerical parity among his troops on the basis of their religious affiliations. However, he faces several problems in this area, the most significant of which are:

--The financial problem: The Israeli general staff oversees the training and armament of the Army of Southern Lebanon. The recent economic austerity plans, submitted by the Israeli Ministry of Finance and extending to the defense ministry budget, will impede Lahd's objectives, particularly since his forces are supplied with outdated weapons because the responsibility for security in the south has hitherto been confined to the Israeli troops, while the "Tzadal" mission has been limited to terrorizing the people there, as was the case in the village of Sahmar where 13 persons were killed. Moreover, the Israeli defense ministry is paying monthly 1,400 Lebanese pounds out of the 1,750 pound monthly salary for the "Tzadal" soldiers and Lahd makes up the difference from his limited budget which he gets from the Lebanese government.

--The sense-of-responsibility problem: The main incentive for Lebanese citizens joining the "Tzadal" ranks is money and personal arms, as we have already

mentioned. Consequently, it is conceivable that this army, or more accurately, these mercenary forces, will turn into a "paper castle" following the Israeli troop withdrawal due to the suspension, or perhaps the delay, of salary payments.

--The sectarian problem: The most deeply implanted and sensitive problem at the Army of Southern Lebanon level and the popular level in the south as well.

Add to that the problem of the struggle with the Lebanese authorities to obtain their official approval for the Army of South Lebanon's continued presence after the Israeli troop withdrawal, particularly since the Israeli officers who have been escorting the Army of Southern Lebanon troops and coordinate their plans and operations and are called "the liaison unit in Lebanon" under the supervision of Shlomo Eliya, will carry on their activities following the Israeli withdrawal. This matter is certain to constitute the most significant intricacy of the Lebanese-Syrian-Israeli negotiations to be held in the coming phase.

The Army of Southern Lebanon is composed of four infantry battalions, a tank battalion and an artillery battalion. Its training base is located in al-Majidiyah. Yitzhaq Rabin believes that it will take one full year to complete its training to be able to carry out its security duties and conduct inspection and patrol operations. Israeli troops recently withdrew from certain areas in the south--Sidon, al-Nabatiyah, Hasbayya and Tyre Port in particular--which they turned over to the Army of Southern Lebanon forces' authority, something acclaimed by Lahd, namely the gradual control of the south. He believes that a hasty withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon will force Israel to undertake a new military operation within 1 year at the most.

In addition to Israel's apprehensions over the possibility of the Army of Southern Lebanon turning into a "paper castle" after the trouble it went through to train and arm it, its present apprehensions are caused by information, published by western sources, about the penetration of a number of national resistance members in the south into the Army of Southern Lebanon's ranks where they use their position to conduct anti-Israeli troop operations, particularly following the apprehension of one of them while planting a mine to blow up an Israeli truck. At any rate, "Tzadal" under the command of Lahd has become Israel's only "hope" for withdrawal from Lebanon, according to most Israeli officials. The importance and the standing of such a "hope" came into view during the recent visit of Norwegian defense minister Anders Sjaastad to Israel where he met with Yitzhaq Rabin. Press circles in Tel Aviv mentioned that Sjaastad, whose country has troops in the UNIFIL forces in south Lebanon, turned to Rabin, saying: "We do not depend on Lahd's forces," to which Rabin replied: "The commander of the Army of Southern Lebanon must be relied on more than any other member of the Lebanese government."

12502

CSO: 4404/51

WITHDRAWAL OF LEBANESE FORCES AVERTS CLASH

Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic No 398, 6 Oct 84 p 15

[Article: "Lebanese Forces to Withdraw From Iqlim al-Kharrub"]

[Text] At the conclusion of the second round of the Bikfayya cabinet conclaves, a tripartite meeting between President Shaykh Amin al-Jumayyil and ministers Nabih Birri and Walid Junblatt was held to discuss the security situation in the Iqlim al-Kharrub area following the recent serious military relapse between the conflicting parties there which almost undermined the stability of the capital and its suburbs.

The three examined the serious information communicated by the official security authorities which said "the Israeli occupation forces may trigger the fighting in Iqlim al-Kharrub between the Lebanese Forces, on the one hand, and the Progressive Socialist Party [PSP] and Amal, on the other, with a view to aborting the government trend aimed at putting the Lebanese course on the right track, thus keeping closed the coastal road leading south and freezing any discussion about opening it."

Some people coming from the area said that conditions were worsening and that the general situation in the region was not at all reassuring, particularly given the ground measures being undertaken by each party and which are aggravating the situation. The PSP forces, aided by Amal forces, are establishing new fortifications in the Har axes and have brought into the area new military motorized units. In return, the Lebanese Forces are reinforcing their positions and fortifications in every coastal area in the region. These people also mentioned that most of the region's villages are witnessing a wave of migration to safe neighboring areas in Sidon, Jazzin and the upper Shuf for fear of retaliatory operations, such as those that happened in the mountain, should a battle break out.

A prominent political advisor close to the Lebanese Forces and closely associated with the Bikfayya conclaves told AL-MUSTAQBAL that the Lebanese Forces command is no longer fooled by the Israeli plans, and that, in support of the salvation and national reconciliation march led by President Amin al-Jumayyil and his government and to spare the country new battles useful to Israel, it may adopt a resolution to withdraw its elements from the Iqlim area with a view to facilitating the opening of the coastal road and deploying the Lebanese army along it following an agreement between the "Southern Emergency Committee"

parties over the deployment particulars. It is noted here that the committee was formed recently by the Lebanese council of ministers and includes representatives from the Lebanese army, Amal, the Socialists, the Liberals and the Lebanese Forces. The advisor emphasized that "the decision to withdraw the Lebanese Forces elements from the Iqlim al-Kharrub area will be adopted by the forces' new command to be elected soon."

In expectation of surprises in the upcoming weeks, the battle (should it break out) in Iqlim al-Kharrub will depend on the partial withdrawal the Israeli occupation forces intend to undertake soon in some occupied territories in the south.

12502

CSO: 4404/51

PAPER REPORTS ERSHAD INTERVIEW WITH ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 6 Oct 84 pp 1, 12

[Text] President Lt. Gen H M Ershad said in an interview with the AP in Dhaka On Thursday that he would not hold the national elections as scheduled unless the opposition leaders called off their boycott of polls. If the major political parties did not participate in the polls Martial Law would continue, he said.

It was for the first time President Ershad said that he might put off the December 8 parliamentary polls designed to pave the way for return to civilian democracy.

It is the government's commitment to hold elections. I want all the major political parties to participate in the elections so that it becomes meaningful. We have given the schedule. The balls is in the court of the opposition now.

Martial Law will not be withdrawn until the elections are held and the suspended constitution revived. There is no question about it. There must be some law to rule the country. The country cannot run in a vacuum.

On the demand of the Opposition for the appointment of a non-partisan caretaker government Ershad said "is there any example in history of an impartial government?"

Noting that elections were held under Martial Law in 1970, 1978 and 1979 how the Opposition could presuppose that the election would not be free and fair.

President Ershad indicated that he might relax Martial Law if the Opposition agrees to call off the election boycott decision. It depends on the political parties, he said during the hour-long interview at his Sena Bhaban resident.

If they go for election I could do many things. But if they continue to say that they would not participate in the election under Martial Law, I cannot do anything. I have gone out of my way to accommodate their demand, said Ershad, who put off a scheduled presidential election last May because the Opposition demanded parliamentary election be held first. 'What else can I do?' I have my responsibilities. I feel I can go this far and no further. I have not decided how far I will go; it will depend on their attitude.

Ershad also indicated that election could be jeopardised by the recent floods that have inundated one third of the country and damaged more than one million metric tons of foodgrains.

Ershad, 54, is opposed by two main parties--the left leaning Awami League and the centre right BNP. The Awami League heads a fifteen-party alliance and the BNP heads a seven-party combine.

The alliances have scheduled a mass rally in the capital on October 14, what difference does it make to me? And I am sure I can draw double the crowd they can get. You cannot bring down the government by hartals. I have the support of the people. They cannot deny it. Otherwise they would go to the polls. The rural people of Bangladesh don't want politics, they want food, clothes, shelter and health.

Ershad whose tenure as Army Chief of Staff expires next month said the Defence Ministry would decide whether it would extend the term. "After I retire, I plan to join politics.

I will go for polls if the people need me, he said. Ershad who seeks to follow the path of former President Ziaur Rahman who made transition from military rule to civilian government before his assassination in 1981 said for the first time that he would run for the office. Posing a question he said has President Reagan resigned to go to polls.

Citing his achievement in decentralisation, land reforms, economic growth and people-oriented programmes Ershad said I have done so many things. I want to see them take root. Ershad, the former infantry commander said the Army should have a role in governing Bangladesh which won independence in 1971.

"I told the people at the start: "I assure no further coup provided you assure us a participation in the government. We want to share your difficulties and we want to share your happiness".

On international issues Ershad described absolute nonsense Indian Press reports that Bangladesh was considering granting naval bases to US.

They have never requested for any base, he said. I don't think Bangladesh is so important strategically that they would need a base herd.

He said one or two of the 13 Soviet diplomats expelled from Bangladesh last year have been replaced. President Ershad ordered the expulsion and closure of the Soviet cultural centre of Dhaka on charges that the Soviets were inciting violence and anti-government protests. Ershad called US a good friend.

He rejected the Indian contention that the fence was needed to keep out an influx of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh. "We have peace. There is no communal disturbances, no food shortage. Why should the people of our country leave for an unknown destination and unknown future?" he asked.

CSO: 4600/1101

OBSERVER INTERVIEWS ERSHAD ON ELECTIONS

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 26 Sep 84 pp 1, 12

[Article by Abdur Rahim]

[Text] President Lt. Gen. H. M. Ershad is considering to invite leaders of political parties to discuss major national issues especially the grave situation obtaining in the country arising out of the devastating flood.

In an exclusive interview with THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER on Tuesday at the Bangabhaban, the President however said that there was no thinking of a formal dialogue with the Opposition parties at the moment "But" he added "the door is always open for discussion".

Replying to a question about the apprehension of a confrontation on September 27--the day for dawn-to-dusk hartal called by the Opposition--the President said: "The Armed Forces are the symbol of national independence and sovereignty. It cannot afford to come in conflict with the people." "The fact is there is Martial Law in the country and the Government could not be a silent spectator to the destruction of public property and disruption of peace" the President asserted.

He called upon the Opposition to participate in the elections for transfer of power adding that "power cannot be snatched away". He said that the Government had conceded to whatever demands the Opposition had made in this respect. For example, the President mentioned that the Opposition demanded parliamentary election prior to the election of the President and that had been accepted. Replying to another question, the President said that he did not see any reason why the election should not be held as per the present schedule. He ruled out the possibility of formation of a neutral government before the parliamentary election scheduled for December 8 next.

As regards the Opposition demand for withdrawal of Martial Law now, the President said "there is no way but to continue Martial Law till the suspended Constitution is revived after the elections".

Q: Sir, now that a fresh date for holding the parliamentary election has been set on December 8, 1984, do you think that this date would remain unchanged?

Ans: National elections for Parliament and President, earlier scheduled for May 27, have been revised accommodating Opposition view points and date for the

parliamentary elections has been re-scheduled for December 8. I do not see any reason why election should not be held as per revised schedule. You will find lots of enthusiasm among the people about election.

Q: In a number of public meetings you have said that the Opposition parties are afraid of facing the voters. Under this circumstance do you feel that the major Opposition parties would boycott the election?

Ans: Boycotting elections is completely against the cause of democracy. Demanding restoration of democracy and boycotting elections are basic irreconcilable contradictions. I hope that these parties will serve the cause of democracy and participate in the elections.

Q: Opposition parties demand withdrawal of the Martial Law, dissolution of the present Cabinet and formation of a neutral government as preconditions for their participation in the ensuing election. Are you going to consider these demands?

Ans: Withdrawal of Martial Law is also our demand. We have said time and again and also during the dialogue with the Opposition parties that a country cannot be run in a vacuum. There is no way but to continue Martial Law till the suspended Constitution is revived after elections. Elections are the only means leading to lifting of Martial Law. We can assure you that Martial Law will be lifted the very day Parliament goes into session. It will not continue a day further. In regard to the demand of a neutral government I assure you that we shall follow the examples set by late President Sk. Mujibur Rahman and President Ziaur Rahman and also the traditions followed in Britain and India.

Q: In case major political parties do not participate in the election, would you go ahead with the election schedule?

Ans: I shall, in all circumstances, respect public opinion.

Q: There is a lurking fear in the Opposition camp that the election would not be 'free and fair' under the present Government. How would you remove this apprehension from the minds of the Opposition and ensure a "free and fair" election?

Ans: Past is a mirror through which one sees the future. Our holding of Union Parishad and Pourashaba election is an example of free and fair elections. I shall ensure that the high standard set by my Government is followed in other elections to come. Their apprehension is totally unfounded.

Q: Are you contemplating resumption of dialogue with the Opposition parties to break the stalemate? If so what would be the agenda of the dialogue?

Ans: There is no such thinking of a formal dialogue at the moment. But the door is always open for discussions.

Q: Is there any possibility of introduction of a L. F. O. type (Legal Framework Order) rules to guide the election as was done by the Yahya Govt. in 1970 election?

Ans: There is no such possibility.

Q: It is alleged that the Government machinery is being used by the members of the Cabinet for party propaganda and election purposes. Is there any truth in this allegation?

Ans: There is no truth in the allegation. No question was raised when Ministers were appointed from various political parties in a similar situation from 1977 to 1979. Some of my Cabinet Ministers may be members of a political party but they maintain high standard of political conduct as pursued by the Cabinet Ministers in countries like say, Great Britain and much higher than what was pursued by previous Governments in this country.

Q: Allegations are also made by the Opposition that the Radio and the TV are being widely used for propagation of Janadal views and coverage of the Opposition news and views is nil in the Government controlled media. What is your comment on this?

Ans: Projecting development stories through Government media like Radio and Television is not a new phenomenon in this country or for that matter in this region. I do not think there is propagation of views of a political party through these media. We have not deviated from the principles and practices followed by previous Governments.

Q: Allegation is also made by Opposition parties that relief funds are spent for promotion of Janadal. How do you see this allegation?

Ans: The allegation is absolutely baseless and malicious. This is a motivated propaganda against the Government.

Q: Sir, what is your relation with the Janadal at the moment? Are you going to take over as the chief of the party?

Ans: Janadal is a major political party which supports our policies and programmes, and therefore, I wish the party well.

Q: Are you going to be a presidential candidate? If so when you are going to relinquish the post of the Chief of Army Staff?

Ans: The date for the presidential elections has not yet been announced. In these circumstances I am unable to give a hypothetical answer.

Q: You are seen addressing public meetings from the Janadal platform. But on assumption of power you had repeatedly said that you would not indulge in politics while in uniform. How would you justify your present action?

Ans: I welcome political parties to support my programme and policies. Janadal is wholeheartedly supporting my programme and obviously it can claim my goodwishes in return. I may extend similar support to others who support my policies and programme I have addressed meetings from others' platform as well. We should also keep in mind that I am not only Chief of Army Staff but also President of the country. When I address public meetings I address as President which is the highest political office.

Cabinet Expansion

Q: On assumption of power you had accused, the former President of expanding his Cabinet upto 46 men. Do you think your Cabinet is unwieldy? What are the compulsive factors for expansion of the Cabinet?

Ans: The strength of the present Cabinet is 24 and two State Ministers as against 46 as you have pointed out. From this you will find that I am taking on myself a heavy load of four Ministries which include as many as eight divisions.

Q: Eradication of corruption was one of the major causes for taking over of the country's administration by the Armed Forces in March, 1982. How far this goal has been achieved?

Ans: The Government has taken tough measures to check corruption in various sectors. Corruption cannot be eradicated overnight. It can be eliminated by changing the system for bringing about a new one which is our major objective. We have introduced various preventive measures and these have considerably eliminated corruption.

Q: The recent floods have caused colossal damage to the country. How are you going to overcome this situation?

Ans: Floods have really caused colossal damage this year. We are taking every possible step to see that no one dies of starvation. A massive rehabilitation programme has been launched. Personally I have been visiting every nook and corner of the country almost every day to see for myself the aftermath of the floods and relief and rehabilitation operation. The prompt and pragmatic steps taken by me and my Government have proved to be very effective in tackling the crisis. Inshallah, we will tide over the situation.

Govt. Performance

Q: Are you satisfied with the performance of the present Government?

Ans: We should recall the situation prevailing in the country when we took over the responsibility. There were political chaos, undemocratic activities, sense of insecurity and wide-scale corruption. Since taking over responsibilities in March 1982 my Government has been striving hard to bring in socio-economic and political changes that could improve the lot of the commonman and give the nation a permanent and durable political and economic system. A number of steps including land reform, decentralisation of administration, decentralisation of judiciary, denationalisation of industries etc have been introduced and have already started yielding good results. Decentralisation of the administrative system by way of reorganisation of the administrative units has brought the administration at the door step of the people. The people at the newly constituted Upazila level can now decide their own development projects and look after their welfare. On the judicial front we have taken High Court Benches to six cities other than Dhaka which has brought the High Court nearer to the people. On top of that each of the 64 districts has a District and Sessions Judge with Additional Judges while 464 sub-districts has Magistrates and Munsifs. This decentralisation has resulted in

expeditious disposal of cases. People are very happy about it. Denationalisation of industries has rejuvenated the country's limping economy and the private sector is doing fine since then. Country's export performance and foreign exchange reserve have improved significantly. Our Drug Policy has been termed as revolutionary and is cited as an example in Third World countries.

Q: What prospects you visualise for settlement of outstanding disputes between Bangladesh and India? Would you like to raise the issues in any international forums in case bilateral talks do not product any tangible results?

Ans: Bangladesh wants to live in peace with India. We have a few outstanding problems with India some of which are affecting us very adversely we have been trying our best to settle those problems through negotiations. This process will continue. I am hopeful of solution of the disputes through bilateral negotiations.

CSO: 4600/1095

BEGUN ZIA'S SPEECH AT 5 OCTOBER PUBLIC RALLY REPORTED

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 6 Oct 84 pp 1, 12

[Text] Jajira (Shariatpur) Oct 5:--BNP Chairman Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a mammoth public meeting here today called upon the Government to resign and hold election under a neutral government. And there could not be any election under what she termed an illegal Government.

Held at the Mohar Ali High School premises with Mr. Ekabbar Sikdar, the meeting was addressed among others by BNP Secretary General Dr. Badruddoza Chowdhury, former State Minister Abdul Mannan Sikdar, Mrs. Farida Rahman, Mr. Ahmed Nazir, Sardar Nasiruddin, Mr. Shamsur Rahman and Mr. Rezabuddowla.

Continuing Begum Zia said that her party was a believer in democracy and as such demanded withdrawal of Martial Law through holding of election under a non-partisan Government. However she said, that the present regime had already declared their blueprint and claimed that the Government party would occupy 260 Parliamentary seats out of 300. (Thirty seats are reserved for women). She alleged that the Government did not show any respect to the five-point demand of the Opposition parties. Therefore, she said there was no other way for restoration of democracy except through mass movement. In this respect she called upon the people to make the October 14 rally in Dhaka a success.

She said that the people of this country fought the war of liberation to live in peace. Unfortunately, she lamented, after 13 years of our independence we were forced to fight for democracy.

She said that one should confine his activities to the task assigned to him. This should be strictly followed to avoid unrest in the country.

Speaking about the present economic situation she said that the people were reeling under the hardship. Starving people from the villages were migrating to the city for food and work. She apprehended that there might be a repetition of the 1974 famine.

Referring to the foreign policy of the government she said that the present government was a result of which barbed wire fencing was allowed on the border and no action could be taken against such intransigence.

Further she said the government failed to renew the Farakka agreement for which the northern districts are apprehended to be under severe drought and there was faint hope of crops in this region next season and this would cast a serious repercussion on the economy of the country.

The BNP Secretary General Dr. Badruddoza Choudhury said that the price of every commodity has been raised taxes have been enhanced, elements backed by the present government are freely moving in the society with arms and many lives including that of Mr. Moizuddin were lost at the hands of those anti-socials.

If this regime is allowed to continue in power, the sufferings of the people will only aggravate, he said, and the only alternative to this was to restore democracy through elections under a neutral government.

On way to Jajira Begum Zia addressed a big public meeting at Bajiganj Bazar under Tongibari upazila of Munshiganj district. Mr. Siddiquir Rahman presided over the meeting and it was addressed among others by Dr. Badruddoza Choudhury, Wing Commander (Retd), Hamidullah Khan, Mr. Afajuddin Fakir, Mrs. Jahanara Begum, Mr. Shamsul Islam; former Ambassador of Bangladesh to Indonesia, Mrs. Farida Rahman, Mr. Abdul Hye, Mr. Saifur Rahman, Mr. Rezabuddowia Choudhury and Babul Ahmed.

CSO: 4600/1101

FORMER CABINET MINISTER JOINS JATIYA JANATA

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 2 Oct 84 p 1

[Text] Rear Admiral (Retd) Mosharraf Hussain Khan, a former Navy Chief DCMLA and Minister for Flood Control Water Resources and Power on Monday formally entered politics and joined the Jatiya Janata Party, reports BSS.

Admiral Khan announced his decision at a Press conference held at the office of the party founded about eight years back by General M. A. G. Osmani the Mukti-bahini Commander-in-Chief with the declared objective of establishing democratic rule in the country.

Admiral Khan said from today on as a member of the Jatiya Janata Party he would be a participant "in the ceaseless democratic movement".

Welcoming him the party's acting Convener Syed Mazharul Huq Baqui hoped with the joining of Admiral Khan the party's march ahead to realise its cherished goal would be stepped up.

The party has not so far elected a Chairman since the death of Gen. Osmani on February 16 last.

As his reason for joining the party Admiral Khan said 'Jatiya Janata Party has been fighting for democracy in Bangladesh since its inception under the party's leader General Osmani.'

He said 'I have been keenly following the events leading to the collapse of democratic institutions to this day.'

"Bangladesh is most suited for democracy because of its multifarious problems he said, 'as the solution can only come through collective consultation and not at the whim of individuals'.

Admiral Khan said he had resigned in 1979 from all the positions he was holding for his 'disagreement' with the leaders of the then government and added there had been no change in his 'firm belief' that the country should be ruled only by the people's elected representatives and by no one else.

Asked why he took so long to enter politics he said the intervening period had been 'gestation period' so that he could 'take breath' to be able to run with the people keeping pace with them.

The acting Convener said Janata Party would not contest elections under Martial Law.

CSO: 4600/1097

FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER'S UN SPEECH REPORTED

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 3 Oct 84 pp 1, 12

[Text] New York, Oct. 2:--Bangladesh has reiterated its faith and commitment to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and urged the member states to resolve a new to work for strengthening the organisation reports BSS.

Speaking in Bengali at the 39th UN General Assembly Session here yesterday the leader of the Bangladesh delegation and Adviser for Foreign Affairs Mr. Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury said efforts should be made to make the UN an effective instrument for the fulfilment of its central role maintain international peace and security develop and strengthen cooperation among nations establish equitable economic relations between states and promote fundamental rights and freedom in the world.

The Adviser expressed satisfaction that in recognition of the national language of Bangladesh the United Nations had introduced broadcasting in Bengali and also issued the official translation of the UN Charter in Bengali.

Mr. Chowdhury expressed concern at the deteriorating international relations and listed some of the major world problems.

He touched upon the problems of arms race the Middle East and Palestine Namibia and South Africa Iraq-Iran conflict Afghanistan and Kampuchea Cyprus the international terrorism and the slow progress in negotiations in the area of international cooperation for development.

The Adviser also spoke on administrative and financial measures taken by the government of Bangladesh at home to reach the fruits of administration to the doorsteps of the vast rural population and reactivate the economy through emphasis on private sector.

He said that Bangladesh viewed with deep concern the continuing arms race both nuclear and conventional and observed that the unrestricted use of scarce resources for military purposes had on the one hand created a sense of fear and uncertainty among nations and on the other added to universal social opportunity cost.

He said that it was now universally recognised that a redirection of resources from armaments to development would be in the interest of the developed and the developing countries alike.

About the problems of Middle East and Palestine, Mr. Chowdhury said Bangladesh was convinced that the situation demanded a comprehensive settlement of the problem which must be based on total and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli forces from all Palestinian and Arab territories and the restoration of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people.

Bangladesh he pointed out was also convinced that the participation of the PLO, on an equal footing with all other parties in the peace process was indispensable.

He denounced the policy of apartheid perpetrated by South Africa and said that this policy was not only contrary to the values of the contemporary civilisation, but also against the tenets of all scriptures and religions. Therefore, those who sustained and tolerated, directly or indirectly, the continuance of the policy of apartheid in South Africa were casting an indelible blemish in the history of their own civilisations and transgressing the laws of their own scriptures, he added.

On Namibia and Southern Africa, he said that Bangladesh was irrevocably committed to the cause of the oppressed peoples of Namibia and Southern Africa and reiterated Dhaka's unstinted support to them in their legitimate struggle for freedom, liberty and human dignity. Bangladesh, he said, rejected the persistent attempts to link the independence of Namibia with extraneous issues.

Call to End Iran-Iraq War

About Iran-Iraq conflict, the Adviser reiterated the appeal of Bangladesh to both Iran and Iraq to take full advantage of the many peace initiatives which had been placed before them to bring the war to an end.

Expressing concern about the developments in Afghanistan and Kampuchea, the Adviser for Foreign Affairs said that it was the conviction of Bangladesh that the people of Afghanistan and Kampuchea would be allowed to determine their destiny without outside interference and intervention and this was possible only with the total and unconditional withdrawal of all foreign forces from their territories.

About Cyprus, Mr Chowdhury said that Bangladesh consistently supported the independence, territorial integrity, sovereignty and the Non-aligned status of Cyprus. At the same time, he said, Bangladesh emphasised that no solution of the problem could be lasting unless it took into account the legitimate aspirations of the two communities.

The recent developments had once again demonstrated that the establishment of a biocommunal bi-zonal federated state of Cyprus was the only viable solution of the problem and a beginning to that end must be made through the resumption of meaningful inter-communal talks the Adviser said.

He said as a measure to promote regional and international peace and security. Bangladesh as a littoral state had consistently attached great importance to the creation of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.

Mr. Chowdhury expressed a deep concern at that increasing recurrence of acts of international terrorism and said that Bangladesh believed that concerted efforts by all countries were necessary for the total elimination of the scourge of terrorism.

Bangladesh hoped that peaceful reunification of both the Koreas will be successfully achieved and Bangladesh would support all efforts towards that end. Bangladesh believed that the primary responsibility for attaining a viable solution of the issue of reunification through peaceful means rested with the Koreans themselves, he said.

Economic Crisis

Lamenting the gradual erosion of the concept of multilateralism and global perspective the Adviser called for effective steps to make interdependence work for collective interests and common good and to lay the ground work for a global economic system which is more responsive to the demands of equity justice and fairplay.

He said "while it is true that interdependence has been recognised as a reality in formal gatherings at the highest levels nothing has materialised to translate this awareness into meaningful actions.

In this context he called for early launching of the global negotiations and continued efforts towards the realisation of the goals and objectives of the international development strategy for the third United Nations development decade.

Mr. Chowdhury pointed out that the actual performance of the developing countries since 1980 has been in stark contrast to the growth rate traced in the international development.

He drew particular attention to the economic crisis in Africa and the precarious economic situation faced by the Least Developed Countries. The stifling effects of recession has swollen the ranks of the desperately poor and hungry which is now estimated at around 900 million.

He said the largest concentration of these unfortunate people is in Asia Mr. Chowdhury called for adoption of implementation of a set of immediate measures including an increase in the flow of assistance as a matter of utmost priority to reverse this situation and to reactivate economies of these countries.

Mr. Chowdhury expressed the hope that the mid-term global review in the implementation of the substantial new programme of action in favour of the Least Developed Countries to be held next year will be completed successfully by international community.

He stressed that for the sake of sustained health of the world economy the growth in the developing countries must be undertaken as a self-sustained and mutually reinforcing process and not merely as a by-product of growth elsewhere. He said "if we do not deal with more fundamental structural problems in an adequate manner crisis will overwhelm us".

The Adviser informed the General Assembly that South Asian Regional Cooperation sponsored by Bangladesh was steadily gaining ground and made significant progress. He said that an integrated programme of action under the SARC was launched in the Foreign Ministers meeting in New Delhi in August 1983 followed by the Male ministerial meeting in July 1984.

He said that it was matter of satisfaction that as many as nine areas of cooperation had been identified and working groups had been set up for their examination and implementation. The selection of Dhaka as the venue for the first SARC summit to be held in the last quarter of 1985 was a demonstration of the trust and confidence reposed in Bangladesh, he said.

Speaking about various steps taken by the present government in Bangladesh under the leadership of President Hussain Muhammad Ershad the Adviser said that the reformative steps included economic reform aimed at stopping wastage boosting production and giving maximum encouragement to the development of the private sector.

The most spectacular among the reform measures he said had been the administrative reforms based on the principles of decentralisation and devolution of power to the common people and the judicial reforms based also on the principles of decentralisation. Under the new system the administration had been taken right to the doorsteps of the country's vast rural population.

He also mentioned about the unprecedented floods that had struck Bangladesh this year causing great misery to the people and wide-spread damage to the crops. The government of Bangladesh, he said was doing everything possible to overcome the effects of the extraordinary calamity which had not yet abated adding that President Ershad himself had been overseeing relief measures personally by daily visits to affected areas throughout the country.

CSO: 4600/1099

FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER RETURNS FROM UN, SAUDI ARABIA

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 20 Oct 84 pp 1, 10

[Text] Adviser for Foreign Affairs Mr. Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury returned to Dhaka on Friday from Jeddah after attending the 39th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, reports BSS.

Mr. Chowdhury led Bangladesh delegation at the General Assembly session and later visited Saudi Arabia at the invitation of Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal.

In an arrival statement, the Adviser said that there was a vast fund of goodwill in all countries of the world towards Bangladesh. Particularly, he said, he had noticed great sympathy, deep feelings and understanding for Bangladesh which was ravaged by unprecedented floods this year.

He said there was tremendous appreciation for the measures the Government had taken under the direct supervision of President H. M. Ershad to face the challenges of floods. In this connection he praised the efforts of the overseas Bangladeshis in collecting relief materials for the flood victims at home.

The Adviser said that Bangladesh's constructive approach towards and moderating influence on the formulation of proposals concerning the Middle East, Cyprus, Indian Ocean, South Africa, disarmament, international security, Afghanistan, Kampuchea and Central America has been reflected in the declaration of the meetings of the non-aligned nations.

Mr. Chowdhury said that as Chairman of the 14th Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference, he had presided over a meeting in New York of the Islamic Foreign Ministers and held bilateral meetings with his counterparts on matters concerning the Muslim world.

The Adviser also held discussions at the UN Headquarters with Foreign Ministers of India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Maldives and exchanged views with them on the progress made by the South Asian Regional Cooperation (SARC).

The Adviser referred to Bangladesh's candidature for the 1986 presidency of UN General Assembly and said that efforts were continuing with the concerned member countries for arriving at a consensus on our candidature.

On his visit to Saudi Arabia, the Adviser said that he had detailed discussion with Prince Saud al-Faisal on bilateral relations and also exchanged views on matters relating to the Organisation of Islamic Conference, the Iraq-Iran war, Lebanon, Afghanistan and Palestine.

Mr. Choudhury said that several Saudi leaders would visit Bangladesh before King Fahd's proposed visit to Dhaka. He hoped that the King would visit Bangladesh next year, dates for which would be announced in due course.

He recalled that Saudi Arabia recently donated 50,000 tons of wheat and US dollar two million as relief for the flood-hit people of Bangladesh.

Earlier during his stay at the United Nations Headquarters, the Foreign Adviser addressed the 39th session of the General Assembly as leader of the Bangladesh delegation in Bengali. He projected Bangladesh's view points and approach on different international, economic and other issues.

The Adviser said that Bangladesh's participation had been very useful and there had been appreciation for Dhaka's constructive role at meetings of the non-aligned group, Islamic conference and Foreign ministers of the Group of 77. He said he had boldly reaffirmed Bangladesh's commitment to the UN charter and principles at the General Assembly. He unequivocally pledged Bangladesh's unflinching faith in and principled stand for the efforts in setting international disputes.

CSO: 4600/1110

FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER'S JIDDAH INTERVIEWS REPORTED

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 19 Oct 84 pp 1, 10

[Text] Jeddah, Oct. 18:--Foreign Adviser Mr. Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury has said that Bangladesh favoured a consensus among the member-states of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) in the selection of a right person to succeed Mr Habib Chatti as the Secretary General of the OIC says BSS.

The adviser who is here for a brief visit on way back home from New York, said this in two separate interviews with the Arab News and the Saudi Gazette earlier this week.

Adviser Choudhury who earlier had a meeting with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal told the Saudi Gazette that "a person is not important. The organisation is important."

Bangladesh would not like to give even a semblance of division in the Islamic ummah he said adding "I do not subscribe to the idea of an election traditionally it has never taken place in the OIC".

The question of choosing the new Secretary General will come up at the next OIC Foreign Ministers meeting due to be held in Sanaa in December.

On the Iraq-Iran war, the Adviser said 'we are waiting' for a report from Islamic Peace Committee Chairman and Gambian President Dawa Jawara on his contacts with Tehran and Baghdad. Then we will assess the latest situation and hope to have a meeting of the OIC Peace Committee to make fresh proposals he added.

Mr. Choudhury described Bangladesh' relations with neighbouring India as 'normal' and said 'our effort is to solve problems peacefully through negotiations'. He said that there are some problems between the two countries but they have been outstanding for a long time he added.

CSO: 4600/1107

BANGLADESH, PRC AGREE TO BUILD 'FRIENDSHIP' BRIDGE

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 26 Sep 84 pp 1, 8

[Text] Bangladesh and China on Tuesday signed a "detailed working agreement" on the construction of the "Friendship Bridge" over the river Buriganga.

Mr A R Chowdhury, Chief Engineer, Department of Roads and Highways and Mr Lu Louhe, Economic Counsellor, Chinese Embassy in Dhaka, signed the agreement on behalf of their respective Governments.

Communications Minister Mr A Z M Obaidullah Khan and the Chinese Ambassador in Bangladesh Mr Xiao Xiangquian witnessed the signing of the agreement at 'Sarak Bhaban' in Dhaka.

The Chinese assistance for the construction of the bridge first came up for discussion during the visit of President and Chief Martial Law Administration Lt. Gen. H M Ershad to China last year. An agreement was signed between the two countries on the construction of the bridge in November last year.

Later, talking to newsmen, Mr Obaidullah Khan said that the friendship bridge over the Buriganga would be a lasting symbol of close friendship between Bangladesh and China. Mr Khan thanked the Chinese Government for their cooperation extended to Bangladesh for the construction of the bridge.

He said that another "light bridge" over the Buriganga would be constructed with local resources. He said that preliminary studies had already started on the project that would connect Keraniganj with Dhaka.

Mr Xiao Xiang quian said that the design of the bridge would be completed as quickly as possible. He said that his government wanted to construct a "beautiful bridge" over the river buriganga.

Mr H T Imam, Secretary, Roads and Highways Division, said that the bridge to be constructed at a cost of Taka 30 to 35 crore was expected to be completed within three years.

The concrete bridge will be constructed on the basis of progressive cantilever type construction. The bridge, having a width of 56 feet (four lanes and foot-path) and a length of 2,340 feet, will also connect Dhaka with Mongla Port through Dhaka-Mawa Road.

Under the agreement, China will provide loans on "very easy terms". The Chinese side would prepare design of the bridge and its approach roads and their construction. It will also provide materials and equipment which are not available locally and expert technicians.

CSO: 4600/1096

PAPER REPORTS INDIAN MOVES TO ERECT BORDER FENCE

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 18 Oct 84 pp 1, 8

[Text] Rangpur, Oct 17: With the onset of the dry season Indian Government has taken up a 'fresh move' to erect the controversial barbed wire fence along the Bhurungamari border of Bangladesh.

According to the reports reaching from across the border, the Indian farmers living in the border areas have been asked by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) to harvest "immediately" their crops from the lands along the border with Bangladesh.

The BSF has also engaged a large number of trained volunteers to re-excavate trenches which were filled up after signing an accord at a flag meeting between the BDR and the BSF officials at the Sonahat border on June 10.

The Indians also started constructing a larger number of thatched dwelling houses in the available fallow land close to the international border within the Indian soil between boundary pillars no 1001 and 1010.

The BSF is also learnt to have asked the Indian citizens living in the border areas just opposite Bhurungamari to shift their valuable household belongings to safer places.

It is also gathered that a huge quantity of materials for barbed wire fence was piled up in different camps along the border months ago and new consignments of fence materials are now being rushed to the border areas.

It is further learnt from across the border that the Indian authority has been taking up allout measures for erecting the controversial barbed-wire fence this time along the border with Bangladesh 'at any cost'.

The thatched houses under construction in large numbers are apprehended to be used as "camps" for the Indian armed forces to give cover to erection of barbed-wire fence initially along the Assam border belts.

The people living on the Bangladesh side are observing with concern the prevailing situation on the other side of the border and have become panicky at the war-like preparations by the Indian authority.

CSO: 4600/1106

TEXT OF GENERAL ERSHAD'S 11 OCTOBER SPEECH IN DHAKA

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 13 Oct 84 p 7

[Text] Following is the English rendering of President and Chief Martial Law Administrator Lt. Gen H. M. Ershad's speech at the grand mammoth public rally held at the Manik Mia Avenue in Dhaka Thursday: Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim, My dear brothers and sisters, Assalamo Alaikum.

You have joined the surging human waves from cities, villages from far-flung areas and from all walks of life. Undertaking trouble and hardship you have brought with you enormous love and affection for me and unstinted support for my programmes. Accept my sincere felicitations for this gesture. You are the working people, the peasants, the day labourers and the workers. Your presence in the meeting after day-long hard work is the manifestation of your confidence in me. Peasants have come leaving their ploughs, workers their factories, fishermen their nets, rickshawpullers their rickshaws to stand by me and extend their support to me with unending love.

I might not have the capability to repay the confidence and love with which you have bound me with gratitude. But one thing I can tell you with certainty that I have completely identified my life, my thinking and my ideas with you as I am President of the commonman and not of the place. The way I have been trying to be an everyday companion of your happiness and sorrows, it has left no gap among ourselves. And that is why, keeping total faith in the Almighty Allah, I would like to speak out some important things to you. I hope and believe that you would analyse and realise the message of my words in the greater interest of the country and the nation.

First of all I like to express my gratitude for giving me the opportunity to speak before grand rally of your party.

Dear brothers and sisters,

I am a soldier. I cannot be a member of a political party. I have also no scope of making speeches in public meetings and rallies of any political party. But at the same time I am the President of the country, I have come before you at your call to speak something of vital national importance to you.

You all know under what circumstances I myself and, for that matter, your beloved Armed Forces had to accept the responsibility of running the government 30 months ago. Finding no way out from endless corruption, outrage of the anti-social elements and erosion of moral values and as a whole unbearable and suffocating atmosphere, the then President dismissed his cabinet terming all its members as corrupt.

Since that step could not help improve the situation, so at last responding to the call of the people, the Armed Forces had to accept the responsibility of saving the nation. The then President had told in explicit terms over Radio and Television that there was no other means to save the country excepting this step. He also wished us success. History will hear the testimony. When I accepted the responsibility, I drew attention to the countrymen to some basic matters for absolving national crisis. What are those?

1. Establishment of an elected government at the earliest through free and fair elections.
2. Establishment of people's democracy in the country from the grassroot level of the society in phases.
3. To realise the cause of grievances of the Armed Forces and to earmark their role in the national development activities with a view to ending the recurrence of uprisings in future.
4. To bring basic changes in the administration, economy and judiciary suiting the requirements of an independent country; and
5. To eradicate the corruption which has entrenched in the pores of the society.

I sought cooperation from all, irrespective of opinion and party affiliations for implementing this five-point basic objective. I also sought help and sympathy from them.

I regret to say that although the professionals, working people and the toiling masses responded positively the principal political parties who were in power in the past or are aspiring to come to power in future failed to respond to my sincerity of purpose. Instead, they placed a five-point demand, the principal objective of which is only to allow them in power.

I introduced upazila system of administration to establish people's democracy and for making independence meaningful. Instead of appreciating this sincere step, they said corruption has been extended. By their words, did not they want to say that all government officials are corrupt? Who has given them the right to be little the government officials? Who has given them the right to make such aspersion sweepingly on the honour and the dignity of our government officials? I have brought about basic changes in the judicial system but they opposed that also. In order to bring dynamism in our national economy, I went for extensive denationalisation and gave incentive to private sector industries, but they raised protest against it. We announced revolutionary drug policy, which was acclaimed both at home and abroad but they opposed that also. We

introduced land reform laws to improve the lot of the neglected peasants, but they criticised this step too. We wanted to introduce teaching of the Holy Quran in the curriculum with a view to establishing Islamic values in the society and amongst our children. They have even resisted the step.

I began apprehending the anti-socials and corrupt people and started their trial. But they resorted to movements saying that it was a political oppression. They submitted a list of the political detenus and through that means got the release of anti-social and corrupt elements. At the same time they are propagating that corruption has multiplied because of Martial Law. I have told you earlier and again today that corruption is a national scar. The seed of this scar was sown during the British rule and it increased during the Pakistani time. Those who were in power after the independence nurtured it to a dangerous stage. Its root is entrenched very deeply. It requires united efforts of all to uproot this social vice. The opposition political parties instead of extending any cooperation in this regard rehabilitated corrupt elements in the political platform.

I spoke for a role of the Armed Forces in the national development activities. But they argued how is it possible? I announced election schedule with a view to establishing an elected government at the earliest, but they not only spoke of boycotting the elections now they are also speaking of resisting it.

Then what is the principal objective of the opposition political parties? It is only to oppose me and hence everything that I have been doing. But I do not believe in opposition for opposition's sake.

Ours is a small and problem ridden country. I believe that all problems can be solved through mutual understanding, cordiality, exchange of views and utmost tolerance and above all through greater national unity. And for that reason I have always tried to accommodate and value the opinion of all.

They came with the five-point demand and demanded that the upazila elections have to be stopped. We postponed the elections. They said political detenus have to be released. The people of the country witnessed how they got the release of criminals in the name of political detenus. They said open political activities will have to be allowed. It was conceded. They said newspapers will have to be allowed to write whatever they like. That too was given during the dialogue, they said the parliamentary elections have to be given before any other elections. That was also given. Even after that your five-point demands are there in your five-point basket. Your latest five point is to lift Martial Law and dissolution of the so-called Janadal government.

I had the belief that in the interest of establishing an elected government, you will prove your sense of responsibility. But your endless five-point has made that belief of mine doubtful. Today I am categorically telling you at this grand rally that the election schedule for the national Parliament has been announced first in fulfilment of your expectation. It is not possible to lift Martial Law totally before the holding of elections. Secondly, the present government is not a government of Janadal, it is a Martial Law government. So question does not arise at all to dissolve this government.

In this context, I would like to mention that Janadal is a political party. This party supports my basic reformative measures and 18-point economic programme. I have taken a few leaders of this party in my cabinet for facilitating implementation of these programmes since they support the programmes of my government. The learned politicians of the country should understand that a government does not turn into a party government by merely induction of somebody from any political party in the cabinet. The character of the Government is determined on the basis of somebody from any political party in the cabinet. The character of the Government is determined on the basis of its source of power. The source of power of the present government is Martial Law. I have taken ministers from only one party. Late President Ziaur Rahman had inducted leaders from the front comprising six political parties which supported him in 1978. Even then the government of late Ziaur Rahman remained Martial Law government if not others at least BNP should understand it. They are talking of a non-party government. My government is certainly a non-party and neutral government. But there is no legal bar for any member of the cabinet to contest election. If they want to set an unprecedented example, then is it not proper that the elected parliament should take such decision on this subject? The Awami League and the BNP were the main witnesses that free and fair elections were held and fair elections were held under Martial Law in the past. So I am giving you my assurance that the coming election shall be free and fair. I am not a candidate in this election. Does not arise. The Armed Forces does not belong to any particular party. It is a sacred national asset. I say this frankly that we have that pride. So the apprehension of interference by the Armed Forces in election is unfounded.

Two dozen political parties are carrying on movement together. You are calling hartals and the next day you are claiming that the people are with you. Hartal is never the gauge for people's mandate. It was never. Had it been so the political thinkers would have declared hartal as the means for changing government instead of elections.

After subsequent 15 days, the post of the Deputy Chief Martial Law Administrator will be abolished and from that day all Martial Law courts will be closed down. Side by side fundamental rights and writ jurisdiction of the High Court will be revived according to article 102 of the constitution. In this context I want to mention that the post-flood relief and rehabilitation works are going on in the country. The members of the Armed Forces are engaged in this work. In order to carry on this work the ZMLAs will continue the relevant activities till the elections are held. They will also come back as soon as their task is completed.

The consecutive natural calamities during the last one year had left a great toll on our flourishing economy. Especially, the damage caused by the recent floods is irreparable. 410 upazilas of the country have been affected by the floods. Our brothers, sisters and children lost their lives in the floods. The peasants lost their standing crops, seeds and cattle in this devastating floods.

It is true that we have no control over such devastating natural calamity. It is also a fact that the people did not feel helpless during this flood. The facts of history will prove how much we have been active from the very beginning of the flood to help the flood-hit-distressed people with all our mite and resources.

Dear friends, you will remember that different quarters had apprehended a great famine from the very beginning of this devastating natural calamity. This would have been the natural consequence on the face of extensive crop damage which caused very big food deficit. But by the mercy of the Almighty Allah we have proved that there is no famine in the country. Not only that I want to say firmly that there is no scope of apprehension of famine. We have enough stock of food in our hand. More food is being procured. The relief that has started from the beginning of the flood will continue.

I want to declare once again before this mammoth rally that the relief measures and rehabilitation works will continue till the next harvest. I want to express gratitude on my behalf and on behalf of my government to the nation for its spontaneous response and cooperation to the government in facing the calamity without paying heed to those who attempted to do politics with the miseries of the people.

Dear brothers and sisters,

As I have said earlier, there is no dearth of sincerity on my part and on the part of any member of the Armed Forces for transition to democracy. And with this end in view I am making the above announcement of the programme for withdrawal of Martial Law in phases. The remnants of the Martial Law there after will be withdrawn at the time of first session of the parliament to be summoned after the national elections. Even now if the major political parties do not come forward to take part in the election, it would be unfortunate for the nation.

In this context I want to say unequivocally, do not create anarchy in the name of movement. Do not create law and order situation. Do not take the sincerity shown by us so far as weakness of the government. I have told earlier and also telling today, if you boycott elections I shall be constrained to continue the military rule, in that case it will also not be possible to implement the programme of withdrawal of Martial Law in phases, as announced by me.

At the time of taking over the responsibility of the government two and a half years back, I declared that it would take at least 2 to 3 years to complete the work initiated by me for the nation. I said power would be handed over to the elected government within a period of 2 to 3 years. Today I want to ask, who opposed the upazila (subdistrict) election announced by me for March 24 this year, on the second anniversary of my government, for the purpose of handing over responsibility of running the local upazila administration to elected Upazila Parishad? Who organised movement to foil that election? I want to ask further who were behind foiling the presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled by me for May 27 this year on the basis of the suspended constitution? I or 22-party alliances? You have opposed all elections that have been scheduled so far.

When I announced Union Parishad and Pourashava elections you were the first to oppose these on the plea of holding parliamentary election first. But the democratic minded people of this country foiled your nefarious design by holding the elections as scheduled. In last March, despite the existence of favourable atmosphere for holding the upazila elections, I postponed it showing respect to your points of view.

I declared parliamentary elections prior to the presidential one. You are even opposing that election now. On the contrary, you are saying that I have broken my pledge, I gave elections as promised. But you are the persons who broke promise. You said that you would take part in the parliamentary election if it was held first.

As a matter of fact, your anxiety increases whenever the election schedule comes nearer, you become unbalanced, because you want to avoid elections. You are deadly afraid of facing the elections. You have no courage to face the people with the load of your past misdeeds. Therefore, whenever elections come, you oppose it, you are afraid to face the election because your importance would be cut to size on the basis of public opinion with the establishment of democratic government through elections.

Dear brothers and sisters,

It is my responsibility to arrange for the establishment of democratic government. But it is the duty of the politicians of the country to materialise the work of establishing that government through participation in the elections. I have discharged my responsibility properly by arranging holding to the elections. Now you come forward to perform your duty.

In this context I want to emphatically point that if the elections are not held due to the intransigence of the political parties, I have to accomplish some of the incomplete tasks. One of these is the election of the upazila chairman. The main characteristic of the upazila concept is democratisation of the local bodies. It is not proper to run this administration by the government officials for long.

I postponed upazila election showing respect to your views, but if you do not show respect to this gesture, then the postponed election will be held in the next winter. This is the unfinished task which I want to complete.

My second unfinished Task is to launch an all out campaign against the anti-socials, the corrupt elements and the miscreants. I started this campaign once, but political parties then raised hue and cry when some big shots were apprehended. You are today crying hoarse saying "Azam Khan, Azam Khan". Who is this Azam Khan. He is your man, convicted for 10 years in a murder case, did not your leaders demand his release claiming his innocence? Did not the students leaders issue statements in the innocence? Did not the students leaders issue statements in the newspapers saying that he has been implicated by conspiracy? Did you not receive him at the jail gate with garlands? Did you not arrange for his reception at the university? Did you not demand his release by inclusion of his name in the list of the arrested students? I believed in you and took him to be a good man. I remitted this sentences. He is none but your man but then, as I have said earlier and again saying it now. Whoever might be the criminal, he will get his punishment. If proved guilty, he shall not go unpunished.

But I want to know, who converted these promising youngmen into Imdu Azam Khan? Will they not be punished? Will they always safely stay behind the scene.

I wanted that the elected government on its initiation would launch campaign against the anti-socials, the corrupt elements and the miscreants and also against their mentors.

In fine I want to appeal to your conscience and good sense come to the elections. Hasten the process of democracy. Help me in ending the military rule.

Now I am coming down to the question of the Armed Forces role in development activity. This is not a pre-condition for taking part in the elections. I have wanted repeatedly to draw your attention to a reality in the history of our national politics. This is not for this that the Armed Forces will have to be given share of the power. We are sons of the soil and your brothers. I think it is possible to prevent recurrence of the unfortunate events of the past by employing the total efficiency and skill of the Armed Forces in the national exigencies. We are just putting forward our points of view. You will take the decision about this matter sitting in parliament.

Our aim is to give back the responsibilities to an elected government. You take decision pragmatically, judging against the touchstone of realities and not on any unfounded fear or goaled by any emotional upsurge. You will find that the national duty of the time irrespective of party affiliations and opinions is to take part in the elections. Take part in election forming an alliance of the 22 parties if you like. If felt necessary take more parties in the alliance and win the elections. I shall go back handing over responsibility of running the government to you.

Come, let us ensure peaceful transition to democracy ending the Martial Law rule with the united efforts and initiatives of all. Let us work unitedly to ensure two square meals a day and clothing for the people and generate acceleration in our development work to free the nation from the curse of unemployment. Let us hold aloft in the comity of nations the flag which has been sanctioned by the blood of the million of Martyrs of Bangladesh, let us consolidate the independence and sovereignty of the country.

I shall request the political parties which are outside the 22 party alliances, if you have faith in religion, if you believe in Allah and the Prophet resist them unitedly, build a wall of resistance against them. Don't you want religion to stay in this country? If so, time has come to rise to the occasion and to demonstrate that you want the faith in Allah and the Prophet to flourish in this country. Certainly Almighty Allah will help us.

Khoda Hafez
Bangladesh Zindabad

CSO: 4600/1103

BANGLADESH UN DELEGATE TELLS STAND ON SOUTH AFRICA

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 16 Oct 84 pp 1, 8

[Text] New York, Oct. 15: Bangladesh has strongly advocated for a concerted campaign towards a complete isolation of the apartheid regime in South Africa in all fields--diplomatic, political, economic, trade, social and cultural, reports BSS.

Mr Q. A. N. Rahim, Bangladesh delegate to the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee of the United Nations, in a statement here on Friday said that a mandatory sanction should be applied against South Africa with a view to putting an end to all relations of that country with rest of the world.

Expressing Bangladesh's support for elimination of all forms of racism and racial discrimination and condemning the recent facade of constitutional reforms by South Africa to perpetuate its policy of apartheid through fraudulent means, he said that international efforts must be directed towards compelling South Africa to abandon its policy of sham reforms and to agree to accept the principle of equality of all its citizens without any distinction as to their race or colour.

Reiterating Bangladesh's support to the principle of self-determination for the people of Namibia and Palestine, Mr. Rahim said that Bangladesh had always extended its unstinted support to the just struggle of the people of Namibia for self-determination and national independence of their country under the leadership of South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), their sole and authentic representative.

He said that Bangladesh also had always extended firm, consistent and unequivocal support to the Palestinian brothers in their struggle for restoration of their inalienable rights to self-determination under the leadership of the PLO their sole and legitimate representative.

CSO: 4600/1105

REPORTAGE ON JOURNALISTS' PROTEST OVER RESTRICTIONS

Newspaper Action Committee

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 16 Oct 84 p 1

[Text] The Action Committee of newspapers and news agencies in an emergency meeting on Sunday resented the embargo imposed afresh by the Government on the publication of factual reports. The meeting felt that the action was a direct interference of the Government on freedom of Press and opinion. The meeting noted that at a time when a movement for the restoration of democratic rights was afoot and the Government itself has been reiterating about restoration of democracy, the embargo on publication of news was only hampering the process of democratisation. Expressing the determination to continue the struggle for freedom of Press and opinion the meeting demanded abolition of all restrictions on newspapers.

The meeting dwelt at length on the situation which led to non-publication of the news of the national rallies of 15-party alliance seven party combine and Jammāt-e-Islami held on Sunday following embargo imposed by the Government. Under the impending circumstances publication of true reports became impossible and in protest against the Government action the members of the Action Committee refrained from working.

Boycott of Govt. Functions

A Press release of the Dhaka Union of Journalists further said on Monday that the journalists will boycott all Government functions from today (Tuesday) till Thursday to press home their demand for lifting of ban on Dainik Desh, withdrawal of layoff by the management, withdrawal of warrant of arrests of journalists and employees and lifting of all restrictions on publication of news.

If the demands were not met within Thursday then leaders of the Action Committee will go on hunger strike from Friday next, the Press release added.

Opposition Views Noted

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 16 Oct 84 pp 1, 14

[Text] The leaders of the Opposition political parties and student organisations visited the Jatiya Press Club on Monday and exchanged views with the leaders of the newspaper industry on the situation that led to the non-publication of the newspapers on the day.

They lauded the 'bold step' taken by the journalists, workers and employees of the newspapers for not bringing out the newspapers in protest against the government pressure on deletion of some news about the national rallies organised by the two separate political alliances and the Jamaat-e-Islami.

The leaders of the Central Students Action Committee visited the Press Club in the morning. The leaders of the Jamaat-e-Islamic came later in the afternoon. Then came the leaders of the 15-party and the 7-party alliances.

Speaking first before a gathering of the journalists, Sheikh Hasina Wajed, leader of the 15-party alliance and chief of Bangladesh Awami League, said that the journalists through their action had expressed full solidarity with the movement for democracy. The people will stand resolutely by the journalists in their bold action, she added.

Sheikh Hasina Wajed observed that time had come to take firm stand on the freedom of the Press and it would have to be decided whether the journalists or the owners of the newspaper industry would exercise the freedom of the Press. The owners should remain the owners and not become the editors, she added.

Expressing her full support to the freedom of the Press, she observed that reports should be objective and factual. She pointed out that President Ershad's address before a meeting organised by a political party was given out of proportion coverage in the radio, television and the newspapers. But a much bigger national rally organised by us was not allowed to be fairly and objectively published, broadcast and telecast.

Sheikh Hasina Wajed said that the message of the rally had reached the entire world. The people know our action programme for the restoration of democracy, she noted.

She stated that no amount of repression would succeed in dampening "our courage and determination to win the struggle for realisation of the five-point demand."

Begum Khaleda Zia, leader of the 7-party Alliance and chief of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), addressed the journalists gathering after Sheikh Hasina finished her speech.

Begum Zia stated that the entire nation was united today behind the five-point demand. The government's move to force the newspapers not to publish the reports about Sunday's national rally in an objective manner was a shameful act, she noted. Congratulating the journalists and other newspaper employees for not bowing to pressure, she said that their action had received the acclamation and admiration of all.

Referring to Janadal's rally which was addressed by President Ershad, she said that the reports about the meeting were given more than due coverage in the radio and television. The newspapers also published the reports, she pointed out.

She stated that Mr. Justice Abdus Sattar had every right to address a public meeting and he had explained amply well under what circumstances the power was snatched away from him. The entire world now knows this and our people also know our future course of action for the restoration of democracy.

Begum Khaleda Zia said that they would not budge an inch from the action programme announced by them and 'no repression would succeed in detracting us from our avowed goal of democracy'. She added that late President Zia believed in the freedom of the Press and multi-party democracy.

The Union leaders elaborately explained the situation that led to the non-publication of the newspapers on Monday.

Political Parties Resent

Different political parties and students organisations staged demonstration criticising restriction on publication of news of national rally resulting in non-publication of newspapers on Monday. Leaders of different political and student organisations in separate statements on Monday congratulated the journalists for their role in resisting the government pressure.

Separate processions brought out by 15-party alliance seven-party alliance Jamaat-e-Islami National Awami Party (Harun) Bangladesh Workers Party and Central Students Action Committee paraded main roads of the city on Monday to protest restriction on publication of news of national rally.

The 15-party alliance will hold today (Tuesday) at Baitul Mukarram to protest the government action to curb freedom of Press and to express solidarity with the journalists in their bold step to uphold the freedom of Press. A procession will be brought out after the meeting.

The 15-party alliance in a statement on Monday said that the panick stricken government by the success of the huge rally on Sunday has dealt a blow on the newspapers and freedom of the journalists. The government imposed restriction on publication of news of the rally to stop widening the resurgence created by the rally. The alliance statement added that the journalists has refused to obey the restrictions respecting the verdict of the nation which resulted in non-publication of newspapers on Monday. The alliance congratulated the journalists for resisting the move against freedom of Press and expressed solidarity with the journalists and employees of newspapers.

The alliance statement demanded immediate withdrawal of illegal restrictions and said that result of any action harassing the journalists and other newspaper employees would not be good for the government.

Mr. Nazrul Islam General Secretary of Bangladesh Workers Party in a statement on Monday criticised the government for the situation and said that it was the expressions of the present government's policy to gag the Press. He congratulated the journalists for their stand and called upon them to uphold the freedom of Press.

Mr. Abbas Ali Khan, Acting Amir and Moulana Abul Kalam Muhammad Yusuf, Secretary General of Jamaate Islami in a statement observed that it was not only a naked interference on freedom of Press. The Jaamat leaders said that the journalists have set an instance of not succumbing to pressure of the government.

Mr. Tasnim Anam, President and Syed Abdullah Mohammad Taher, General Secretary of Islami Chhatra Shibir in a joint statement criticised the government for the situation. The student leaders thanked the journalists for their courageous role.

The Islami Chhatra Shibir will bring out a procession at 11 a. m. today (Tuesday) from Baitul Mukarram to protest the government action which led to non-publication of newspapers on Monday.

The Bangladesh Lekhak Union in a statement on Monday resented the non-publication of newspaper following government restrictions imposed on certain news item. They said that freedom of Press was essential for communication of news to the people.

The union believes in democracy and so has expressed solidarity, with the movement for restoration of democratic rights of the people. They said and added that the union will continue to support such activities for democracy.

Press Note Reported

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 16 Oct 84 pp 1, 14

[Text] The Government regretted the non-publication of most of the daily newspapers on Monday, reports BSS.

The Government in a Press Note expressed the hope that all concerned in the newspaper industry would immediately resume publication of their newspapers in appreciation of the situation obtaining in the country.

The Press Note said "since the promulgation of Martial Law in 1982, attention of the newspapers and the news agencies in the country was being drawn from time to time, to relevant provisions of Martial Law regulations and orders in the matter of publication of certain categories of news, comments etc. In order to assist the media in their professional responsibilities without unnecessarily invoking Martial Law for its violation.

In pursuance of that policy attention of the newspapers and news agencies was drawn as usual, on certain portions of statements made by some political leaders on October 14 which came within the purview of Martial Law. It was later learnt that newspaper matters were accordingly ready for publication, but in view of a section of newspaper employees reacting adversely most of the dailies could not come out on Monday.

Government has noted with regret that this unfortunate thing happened at a time when the country was on its march towards positive transition to democracy and

when the Government and the people were faced with the task of rehabilitation, after the unprecedented and devastating floods.

It is now hoped that all concerned in the newspaper industry would immediately resume publication of their newspapers in appreciation of the prevailing situation."

More Criticism Noted

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 17 Oct 84 pp 1, 12

[Text] Criticism by different political and student organisations of the Government restriction on publication of news of the national rallies on October 14 continued for the second day on Tuesday.

The city unit of 15-party alliance at a rally held on Tuesday at Baitul Mukarram stated the Government action curbing Press freedom. The rally congratulated the journalists and other newspaper employees on their hold stand against the Government measure to gag the Press.

Later a procession was brought out which started from Baitul Mukarram and passed through Bangabandhu Avenue, North South Road and dispersed at Jativa Press Club.

Begum Khaleda Zia in a statement on Tuesday said the government restrictions on objective news dissemination of the national rallies held in the capital on Sunday last only demonstrated the anti-people character of the regime.

She was extremely critical of the government move in restricting the newspapers from coming out with an objective picture on the national rallies.

She said the nation is by now aware that the seven-party alliance 15-party alliance and Jamaat-e-Islami organised massive rallies in the capital on Sunday last. The people who came from far flung areas lent their total support to the Opposition demand for a neutral government for holding of the parliamentary elections, she added.

The Central Executive Committee of United Peoples Party in a resolution adopted in its meeting on Monday criticised the Government restriction on publication of news which resulted in non-publication of newspapers in Dhaka on Monday. Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Chairman of UPP presided over the meeting. The meeting demanded immediate repeal of the Printing and Publication Act, withdrawal of ban on Dainik Desh, weekly Ittehad and weekly Khabar.

The Central Committee of Bangladesh Workers Party at a meeting on Tuesday congratulated the journalists on resistance against the restriction on publication of news and said that the journalists expressed their respect to the verdict given by people at the national rally.

The Central Committee of National Awami Party (Harun) in a meeting on Monday deplored the Government action. The committee demanded coverage of opposition news with due importance in radio and television network.

The Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Shibir held a rally at Baitul Mukarram on Tuesday to protest the Government restriction on publication of news of national rally. The rally demanded freedom of Press. The rally was followed by a procession.

The Bangladesh Jatiya Chhatra Union in a statement on Tuesday hailed the stand by newspaper employees to resist the restriction on publication of news.

The Jatiya Chhatra Union will hold a rally at Madhu's canteen at 10 a. m. to-day (Wednesday) to protest the Government restriction.

CSO: 4600/1104

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN RESIGNS PARTY, GOVERNMENT POSTS

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 2 Oct 84 pp 1, 8

[Text] Mr Mahbubur Rahman has been relieved of his responsibility as Secretary General of Janadal and has been replaced by Mr Mizanur Rahman Choudhury, a vice-president of the party.

Mr Mahbubur Rahman, who was Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives has also resigned from the Council of Ministers on health ground. He submitted his resignation to the President and Chief Martial Law Administrator, who accepted his resignation yesterday, according to an official announcement.

Mr Mahbubur Rahman's handling of the Janadal affairs, particularly the September 27 situation in a bid to disrupt the hartal invoked sharp criticism from the party leaders and the government ministers, some of them are also members of the Supreme Council of Janadal. The Supreme Council in a meeting on September 29 decided to relieve Mr. Mahbubur Rahman of his responsibility as Secretary General of the party and appointed Mr Mizanur Rahman Choudhury new Secretary General of the party.

Mr Choudhury was maintaining low-key following appointment of Mr Ataur Rahman Khan as the senior vice-president of Janadal superceding him, Mr. Choudhury, who is known as a moderate, managed to come to the lime light when the party infighting took a new turn over the handling of the hartal situation by Mr Mahbubur Rahman, that sparked off adverse reaction both in the government and the political circles.

Prime Minister Mr Ataur Rahman Khan who is also Senior Vice-Chairman of Janadol told BSS that considering the unwillingness of Mr Mahbubur Rahman to continue as Secretary General of the party due to health reasons, the Janadol Supreme Council had decided to relieve him of this responsibility.

Mr Mahbubur Rahman was appointed an Adviser in the Council of Advisers to the Chief Martial Law Administrator on March 29, 1982. He was in charge of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives.

Later he was made a minister in the Council of Ministers and was holding the same portfolio.

Mia Shahid Hossain and M. H. Khan Manju, President and General Secretary respectively of Natun Bangla Jana Juba Sanghati in a statement yesterday congratulated Mr Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury for his nomination as party Secretary General.

WIFE OF PARTICIPANT IN 1975 COUP TALKS TO PRESS

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 6 Oct 84 pp 1, 12

[Text] Mrs Farida Rahman, wife of Col. (Retd) Farook Rahman urged the government to make public the whereabouts of her husband Col (Retd) Farook was one of the army officers who troppled the government of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15, 1975.

Addressing a Press conference at the Jatiya Press Club Mrs Farida Rahman alleged that her husband Col (Retd) Farook was arrested by the government in January this year when he arrived at Zia International Airport from abroad. She said that since then all her attempts to know the whereabouts of her husband failed.

Expressing her surprise Mrs Fairda Rahman said that the government instead of giving any reply to her queries on the whereabouts of Col (Retd) Farook the government suddenly made a fresh move and deployed its law enforcing agencies to find him out. She posed a question in whose custody is Col. (Retd) Farook now?

Mrs Farida Rahman further alleged the members of the Special Branch and Detective Branch were harassing the family members of Col. (Retd) Farook. She said that her younger brother was arrested from Chittagong recently without specific charges against him. She further said one of her uncles was also arrested by the government. She alleged that the whereabouts of her brother and uncle were not intimated to their families. She demanded release of her husband, brother and uncle.

The Press conference was also attended by the wives of Col. (Retd) Shahriar and Major (Retd) Baziul Huda, Col (Retd) Shahriar and Major (Retd) Baziul Huda were also arrested recently by the government. They also urged the government to inform them of the whereabouts of their husbands and release them.

CSO: 4600/1101

MUSLIM LEADER DEMANDS STRUGGLE FOR ISLAMIC RULE

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 27 Oct 84 pp 1, 8

[Text] The chief of Bangladesh Khelafat Andolan and 10-party Combined Action Acommitte, Maulana Mohammadullah Hafezji Huzur called for a jehad (holy war) to establish 'khelafat' (Islamic rule) in the country.

Addressing a huge rally at the Baitul Mukarram Square on Friday afternoon, he said that the establishment of Islamic rule was the panacca for all socio-economic and political ills and pledged total sacrifice for attaining the goal.

Presided over by Hafezji Huzur, the rally was also addressed by President of Bangladesh Islamic Democratic League Maulana Abdur Rahim, Vice President Barrister Korban Ali, President of Jatiya Mukti Andolan Major (Retd) M A Jaleel, President of Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islam Maulana Abdul Malek Halim, Secretary General Maulana Ashraf Ali, Secretary General of Khelafat-e-Rabbani Party, Rafiqullah Chowdhury, Deputy Chief of Khelafat Andolan Maulana Azizul Huq, city chief Maulana Abdul Gaffar, President of Islami Jubo Shibir Ahmed Abdul Quader, Chairman of Islamic Republic Party Habibullah Chowdhury, and General Secretary of Jubo Andolan A T M Hemayetuddin, Prof. Akhtar Faruq, Publicity Secretary of Khelafat Andolan read out the resolutions.

The 93-year-old Maulana Mohammandullah Hafezji Huzur said that he had appealed to the successive governments beginning from Zyub Khan to take measures for the establishment of Islamic rule but none had listened to 'my call'.

He said that the present government also pledged to introduce Islamic rule but no step to this effect had so far been taken. On the other hand, anti-Islamic activities had become widespread he said.

Mauland Hafezji Huzur said that unrest in all fields had gone up in the country and added "peace cannot come without the establishment of the rule of Allah on the soil of Allah".

A number of resolutions, including the three-point demands of the Combined Action Committee were adopted at the rally. These demands were: immediate end of martial law and formation of a revolutionary government comprising tested ulema, Islamic thinkers and religious intellectuals; a declaration making the country Islamic Republic of Bangladesh and framing of an Islamic constitution by ulema and Islamic experts, holding of a referendum to adopt the constitution and holding of national election on the basis of the same.

By another resolution, the meeting rejected the schedule for parliamentary elections and now-postponed upazila polls and instead call for taking part in a jehad for an Islamic revolutionary government under the leadership of Hafezji Huzur.

The meeting warned "US-Soviet-Israel axis" for Muslim repression, demanded the ouster of Israel from the United Nations and condemned Indian Government for its continued intransigent policy in solving standing disputes between the two countries.

Addressing the rally, Maulana Abdur Rahim said that 90 per cent people of the country who were Muslims wanted neither socialism nor secularism but Islamic rule based on the teachings of the Holy Quran and Sunnah. Those political parties who did not subscribe to this view did not actually represent the wishes of the people.

5-Pt. Demand Bogus

Maulana Rahim described the five-point demands of the 22-party alliances and Jamaat-e-Islami for transition to democracy as "bogus" and said that the people were in favour of their three-point demands. He also criticised the government for what he said betraying the wishes of the people.

Jail

Major (retd) M. A. Jalil said that the rally was the beginning of a massive movement for the establishment of Islamic rule in the country. People would never accept secularism in the country and he cautioned the people against machinations by Russia, United States and India against our sovereignty and said, "Muslims will never owe allegiance to anybody except Allah".

He criticised President Ershad for "usurping power by ousting an elected government" and said "there will be no compromise with Ershad. He said, "our movement is not for resisting the 22-party alliances but to remove all socio-political and economic ills from the society".

Deputy Chief of Khelafat Andolen said that there were merits in democracy but there were demerits too. Once elected, the representatives go beyond the reach of the commonman.

He criticised non-development expenditures like building of mousoleums on dead men and said "these were beging done when people were deprived of their basic needs".

Maulana Azizul Huq said establishment of khelafta would ensure full security to the non-Muslims of the country.

CSO: 4600/1117

POPULATION CONTROL FALLS SHORT OF PLAN TARGET

Dhaka HOLIDAY in English 12 Oct 84 pp 1, 8

[Article by Hossain Khasru]

[Text] Despite increased flow of funds to the family planning and population control sector and "priority focus" of the administration on curbing the population growth rate within reasonable limits, the successes of the concerned agencies in putting a halt to the 'baby boom' have so far been far short of the targeted level for the current Second Five Year Plan period (1980-85).

Over 35 percent of the planned target will remain unfulfilled by June '85 when the current plan period terminates, according to a reliable account.

A sum of about taka two billion, bulk of which came in the form of development grant from International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank, USAID, UNFPA and other donors, have been utilised (this includes current year's likely level of utilisation) over the last eleven year period since 1973-74. This, however, excludes the recurring government expenditures out of the revenue budget in the sector over the period under review.

The public expenditures, both recurring and non-recurring, and the extended official network in this particular sector has succeeded in only bringing down the population growth rate from 2.48 percent per annum during the previous intercensal period of 1961-74 to 2.32 percent per annum during the last related period of 1974-81. According to official statistics, the country's population stood at 96 million in 1984, doubling in last three decade's time.

The two-year crash population control programme launched in July, 1982 with the aim of reducing the population growth rate to 1.5 percent, ended in an utter flop in June, '84. According to a reliable estimate, the population growth rate after the expiry of the original crash programme stood at 2.35 percent.

Serious organisational weaknesses still persist in the family planning and population control sector, leading to poor performance in related fields and resulting in 'growing imbalance' between overall economy growth and population growth rates. Besides administrative shortfalls, field-level operations by the concerned officials have been far short of expectations. Inputs delivery arrangements have not improved to the desired level. Motivational works among the eligible couples in the rural areas have still been poor.

Demographic Objective

Against this backdrop, the demographic objective of the current Second Five Year Plan will remain by and large unfulfilled. The objective was set for reducing the 1980 total fertility rate (TFR) of 5.85 to 4.1 by the year 1985 and the corresponding child birth rate (CBR) from 43.25 to 31.25 per thousand.

According to a recent estimate by the World Bank, 19 percent of currently married women aged 15 to 49 used contraception in Bangladesh in 1983-84. The contraceptive use pattern showed that 36 percent of women in the urban areas belonging to the above category used contraception while the figure for the rural counterpart was only 17 percent in the year under report, the World Bank report said.

The performance in the family planning sector thus amply reflected that the most of the immediate target population, consisting primarily of the poorest "survival group" in the rural areas and constituting 66 percent of the eligible couples were yet to be covered under the programme.

Lags in real rural developments programmes benefitting the poorest segment of the population, lack of effective progress in the field of rural electrification, absence of proper primary health care, maternity child health (MCH) and nutritional services and no satisfactory progress in increasing educational and employment opportunities particularly for rural women have all combined to result in poor operational performance in widening the acceptance rate among the rural eligible couples.

Meanwhile, the government despite its apparently high commitment to the family planning sector has failed to take matching legal measures for appropriate incentive and disincentive purposes to give the population control activities the desired level of policy support and dynamic thrust.

According to knowledgeable circles, the failure to extend the family planning information, motivation and service to the 'critical mass' of 30-35 percent acceptors mainly through quality service has caused the stage, to be ill-prepared yet for a rapid decline in fertility rate in the country.

Singapore, Japan and South Korea which are cited as "success stories in family planning" have witnessed rapid decline in fertility through effective coverage to this "critical mass of 30-35 percent acceptors".

Singapore Experience

To cite the case of Singapore here, the country has attained international recognition for its very successful family planning programme under the 'social engineering' action policy of its government. As far as family planning and population control activities are concerned, social engineering has otherwise worked miracles in that country--traditionally child-oriented Chinese have been transmuted into family planners. The population growth rate has now been reduced to 1.5 percent from the level of 2.3 percent recorded in 1960s.

Besides the extension of the service facilities, there are incentive and disincentive measures for the population like higher charges, taxes and levies on the third or fourth child, financial rewards for performing female ligations after the second child etc.

The average marrying age in Singapore is 28 for men and 25 for women over the last one decade. It has been the practice with the married Singaporeans to think about family planning right at the beginning. Fourth or latter child now account for only six percent of all births, a record decline over the last eleven years from the level of 23 percent of such births in 1973. The average infant mortality has also come down to 9.4 per thousand from over 17 percent in 1973. This is one of the lowest infant mortality rate in the world now.

As for family planning practices, about 64 percent of the eligible couples use condoms. The contraceptive pill is used by 34 percent of the most fertile women who practise birth control between the first and second children or even before the first.

And now at a stable level of population growth after long two decades' rigorous efforts at successful family planning, the Singapore government is encouraging and persuading the graduate women to breed more "in order to safeguard the national IQ".

The graduate mothers scheme under which concessional facilities for admission for the third fourth child of such mothers are to be given the best schooling facilities or including priorities in admission has however raised some resentment among the non-graduate mothers who maintain that there is no logical, scientific relation between graduate mother's children and higher national IQ. Yet then, the controversy on this scheme persists only at a time when Singapore has reached the goal of stable population base for itself.

CSO: 4600/1102

WRITER NOTES ECONOMY SLIDE BACK 'INTO CRITICAL PHASE'

Dhaka HOLIDAY in English 19 Oct 84 pp 1, 8

[Article by Hossain Khasru]

[Text] The establishmentarian optimism, as was robustly expressed by Finance Adviser M. Syeduzzaman in his last budget speech about the economy having come out of recession and being comfortable poised for steady growth in fiscal year, 1984-85, is now clearly belied.

The economic operations over the last three and a half months' period till October 15, 84 have remained depressant--falling production, phenomenal price upswing, in case of basic essentials, low investment in public and private sectors, unabated spree in monetary growth, levelling-off of remittances and, on top of all, growing pauperisation in rural areas.

Devastating flood and its crippling effects on the broad economic activities have accentuated the problems, notwithstanding the claims of success by the government about its "massive relief and rehabilitation programme through the well-ramified upazilla administration".

The economy as all available indices reflect is now sliding back into the most critical phase of a deepening crisis. And to make matters worse, political uncertainty has injected strong elements of instability into the organised sector of the economy. The hope for retrieval at this stage seems indeed very poor.

In the agricultural sector, the foodgrains production has suffered the most damaging effects of flood. The seed crisis as much as the inadequate institutional support for inputs delivery have blighted the prospects for recouping the flood losses through intensive aman cultivation. The September flood has also given one more crippling blow to the agricultural production. The situation relating to foodcrop production will become clearer by the middle of next month when the aman crop, the principal foodcrop in the country, is ready for harvesting.

Agricultural cash crops like raw jute, sugarcane etc, have also borne the brunt of severe flood damage, worsening the income-earning position of the small and medium farmers.

Seed Crisis

Meanwhile, the seed crisis will adversely affect the coming wheat crop production which has of later been targeted to cover 20 lakh acres of land. Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) is reported to have in its stock only six lakh maunds of improved and local wheat seed varieties and this is hardly enough to meet 70 percent of seed requirements of the corporation to reach the targeted acreage. The availability of wheat seeds with the farmers is also low in view of the fact that most of the seeds have already been used by them as food because of the famine-like situation that prevailed in most of the flood-hit areas.

It is now certainly in doubt as to whether the overall foodcrop production target at 16.7 million tonnes in 1984-85 can be achieved. Leaving aside the effect of shortfalls in non-foodcrop production, the gap in meeting the production target of foodcrop which constitutes about 40 percent of agricultural production in the country will make it impossible to attain the overall agricultural growth target at 4.8 percent for the current fiscal year.

In the industrial field, jute sector which constitutes the major organised industrial sector within the economy is already in a severe crisis because of shortfall in raw jute availability, its high prices, and consequent uneconomic operations for the whole industry. Textile sector is also in trouble and the huge inventory pile-up in spinning sub-sector because of severe contraction in demand for yarn by the local handloom weavers in the aftermath of flood. The price of yarn of 40 count has recorded a marked decline over the last two months but this has not improved the marketing operations of the mills. As inventories continue to pile up, production process will deliberately be slowed down.

Responsible circles feel that the industrial growth rate with the performance recorded in the last three and a half months will trail much behind the projected level of eight percent for the year. The major push to this economic growth process which was expected to come from a surge in development activities in power and natural gas sub-sectors is not in sight in view of still-continuing slacks in investments in this sub-sector. The growth rate in power and natural gas sub-sector was earlier projected at 24.8 percent for 1984-85.

While production and development activities have continued to suffer, the prices of essential items including foodgrains have maintained steady uptrends despite the fact that the government has otherwise released maximum quantum of foodgrains from its stock this year. Between July and mid-October this year, rice price has recorded a 20 percent rise in the market. As rice is the price leader in an essentially agrarian economy of the country, the prices of other essentials have also showed an upswing, eroding the real incomes of the people.

The investment activities in the public sector which are programmed at the level of Tk. 38.96 billion for 1984-85 have not really got off the ground so far this year. With continuing slacks in project aid utilisation and other constraints in development administration, a sizeable implementation shortfall in many key areas is not unlikely this year.

The annual development programme, to mention here, includes a local currency outlay of Tk. 20.49 billion and a project assistance component of Tk. 18.47 billion covering 914 projects including 375 core projects. The directives issued by President and Chief Martial Law Administrator Lt. General H. M. Ershad after a meeting of National Economic Council last week to all concerned agencies of the government to make all out efforts to achieve the target of distribution of project aid and improve the implementation performance reflected the concern over the problems relating to public sector [word missing].

In the private sector, investments this year will obviously be slow because of the general economic impact of the devastating flood as well as the uncertain political situation. The twenty billion taka investment target for the private sector is by all available indications seems to be an overoptimistic for the current year. The development financial institutions (DFIs) and the investment corporation, faced with severe recovery problem, are neither prepared yet to play the supportive role in this context to attain the private sector investment target.

Money supply in the economy has continued to remain a cause of serious concern. The monetary expansion rate over the last three and a half months' period has made it pointedly clear that the overall liquidity expansion will exceed the limit of 16 percent for the current year unless greater vigilance is maintained to monitor the monetary growth in the light of the actual economic performance.

The original monetary expansion limit, to note here, was set on the assumption of a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of about six percent and price rise within 12 percent during 1984-85. How far these assumptions are valid now remains to be clearly examined afresh.

Meanwhile, the remittances by Bangladeshis working abroad are likely to level off this year in view of the situation in Iraq and other Middle Eastern countries where the bulk of the overseas Bangladeshis are concentrated. The authorities projected earlier that such remittances would be around 600 million US dollars in 1984-85. Reliable estimates now suggest that a ten percent shortfall in projected level of remittances is likely this year.

And within the country, rural pauperisation process under the gnawing impact of flood has accentuated further. The 'massive dole operations' of the government have not succeeded in reaching the target groups. One report of the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) has clearly reflected the limitations of such operation in Bangladesh.

According to the report, only 54 percent of support materials including foodstuff reach the target population under vulnerable group feeding programme which is one of the major relief operations for the rural destitutes in Bangladesh. And this report would bear out the huge leakage under any government organised relief programme in the country.

CSO: 4600/1109

FOREIGN INVESTMENT PROPOSALS MAKE LITTLE PROGRESS

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 19 Oct 84 pp 1, 8

[Text] About 50 per cent of the foreign investment proposals approved by the government during last ten years ending in 1982-83, did not materialise for a variety of reasons.

A large number of projects approved by the government during last financial year (1983-84) might also face the same fate.

Industrial circles listed a number of problems including cumbersome official procedure, failure of the local partner in providing his share of investment and often unstable political situation as major reasons for poor progress in foreign investments.

Though situation, with regard to the implementation of foreign investment proposals, had slightly improved following the creation of the investment assistance unit (one stop service) in July 1982 it was far from being ideal.

Since fiscal year 1974-75, the Department of Industries approved 61 foreign investment proposals (equity participation) upto June 30, 1983, but, according to official sources, there had been no progress till date in the implementation of 31 projects.

During 1983-84, another 91 joint investment proposals were approved by the government.

Sources said that in spite of the fact that one stop service had been created to help the investors, both local and foreign, its recommendations for land allocation, loans from the financial institutions, power and water connections etc. did not get timely attention of the concerned authorities. The delay often told upon the patience of the foreign investors and many of them ultimately abandoned their ventures.

Recently a high-level meeting decided to initiate measures to revamp the one-stop service.

The foreign investment proposals sanctioned so far include leather footwear, drugs and pharmaceuticals, manufacturing of marine diesel engines, readymade

garments, aluminium products, processing, canning and preservation of fruits and vegetables, synthetic cloth, watches and clocks, dry cell battery, electric fan, electric lamps and lightings, industrial chemicals, plastic products, radio and component and television, quality cigarettes, glass sheet and glass products, steel casting, electric meter, quality match, pumps, mosquito coils, insecticides, deep sea fishing, powerloom, oxygen and edible and non-edible oil.

CSO: 4600/1108

RESULTS OF INDO-BANGLADESH DELHI TALKS REPORTED

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 19 Oct 84 pp 1, 10

[Text] Indo-Bangladesh bilateral industrial cooperation will receive a new boost following the decisions of the just-concluded meeting of the Standing Committee of the Joint Economic Commission between the two countries.

The meeting which concluded in New Delhi on Tuesday last endorsed the undertaking of feasibility studies in new industrial fields covering paper products diversification, chlorinated products based on expansion of caustic soda production, basic pharmaceutical chemicals, pesticides/chemicals, steelstrip manufacturing and alloy/special steel plant etc.

To firm up measures for already-identified fields of industrial joint venture between the two sides, Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation (BSEC) would make available the results of site survey and soil investigation for sponge iron and steel complex by November, '84 and the Indian consultant firm, MECOM, would submit the related project proposal by March '85. The results of commercial testing of clay for Surma cement project will be sent by Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation to the Cement Corporation of India by November, '84. An Indian team from its Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC) and the National Industrial Development Corporation (NIDC) will be visiting Bangladesh in November during the next sugar crushing season to examine the balancing, modernisation and replacement (BMR) works in the sugar industry.

The Standing Committee in its meeting noted with satisfaction the utilisation of two separate credit lines offered by India. The disbursement of Indian rupees 40 crore by the Indian Eximp Bank would be completed by the designated Bangladesh Banks by December, 1984. The terminal date for utilisation of the other government-to-government credit line-up of Indian rupees 20 crores had meanwhile been extended upto June, '85 at the request of the Government of Bangladesh.

The two sides at the meeting decided to establish telex and direct trunk dialing between the two capitals within the next one month. Air services cooperation for linking Dhaka and Delhi directly by the two national airlines was also agreed upon but the two airlines while operating the flights would have no traffic right beyond the two destinations.

In the bilateral trade relations characterised by imbalances against Bangladesh, the two sides reiterated the need for making combined efforts for expanding and diversifying the bilateral trade with special emphasis on achieving a better balance of trade. The trade imbalance against Bangladesh, to note here, stood at Taka 77 crore in 1983-84 when India exported to Bangladesh goods worth Taka 117 crore and imported from the same goods worth only Taka 41 crore.

While bilateral trade discussions figured on Bangladesh export items like newsprint bitumen, naptha Jamdani sarres, jute carpets, wetblue leather, pulp etc. No concrete and positive decisions were taken in the meeting.

The Indian side is reported to have pressed further at the meeting for exporting natural gas from Bangladesh. But Bangladesh in view of absence of any firm estimate about the country's proven gas reserve and the future consumption requirements preferred not to proceed any further with the Indian proposal.

With regard to rail transit facilities Bangladesh is learnt to have told the Indian side that the recent flood had brought severe damage to track signalling and other operational aspects of Bangladesh Railway making it difficult at this stage to consider the transit facilities for India without compelling the rehabilitation work.

The Standing Committee of the Joint Economic Commission decided to hold discussions on the proposed agreement for the avoidance of double taxation between India and Bangladesh in November 1984.

Meanwhile the joint Economic Commission at the ministerial level will hold its next meeting in New Delhi in January '85 after the general elections in India are over.

CSO: 4600/1107

LAND REFORMS ORDINANCE EFFECTIVE AS OF APRIL

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 19 Sep 84 pp 1, 8

[Text] The Land Reforms Ordinance promulgated by the Government has been made effective from the first day of Bengali month of Baishak 1391 (BS) corresponding to April 14, 1984, according to official sources in Dhaka on Tuesday, reports BSS.

One of the provisions of the ordinance provides that if anybody acquires new land in addition to sixty standard bighas of agricultural land that additional land will be vested with the Government and for which no compensation will be paid. But compensation will be paid if it is acquired through inheritance, gift or will.

Limitation on acquisition of agricultural land is as follows: No malik who or whose family owns more than sixty standard bighas of agricultural land shall acquire any new agricultural land by transfer inheritance, gift or any other means.

A malik who or whose family owns less than sixty standard bighas of agricultural land may acquire new agricultural land by any means, but such new land together with the agricultural land owned by him, shall not exceed sixty standard bighas.

If any malik acquires any new agricultural land in contravention of the provisions of this section, the area of land which is in excess of sixty standard bighas shall vest in the Government and no compensation shall be payable to him for the land so vested except in the case where the excess land is acquired by inheritance, gift or will.

Compensation for the excess land payable under sub-section (3) shall be assessed and paid in such manner as may be prescribed--provided that where such compensation is payable only for a portion of the excess land, the assessment and payment of commensation shall be made for such portion of the excess land as the malik may specify in this behalf.

CSO: 4600/1093

MEMORANDUM SIGNED WITH INDONESIAN TRADE DELEGATION

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 19 Sep 84 p 1

[Text] Bangladesh and Indonesia on Tuesday signed a memorandum of understanding under which Jakarta has agreed to supply Dhaka upto 15000o metric tons of rice reports BSS.

The understanding was signed after two days of talks between the Bangladesh officials and visiting Indonesian delegation which considered the common interests of both in exploring the possibilities of further developing and diversifying the trade between the two countries. The discussions in two day of talks were in conformity with the general trade agreement signed between the two countries in 1978.

The memorandum said Indonesia has agreed to make "endeavour to accommodate" Bangladesh's request for rice on a 'mutually' agreeable terms. On the question of price mode of payment specification packing and other details the memorandum said it would be required to be agreed upon in each contract that may be entered into between the agencies of the two countries within the framework of the understanding signed on Tuesday.

S. A. Mahmood Secretary of Food and General Sukria Atmaja leader of the Indonesian delegation and Vice Chairman Bulog signed the memorandum on behalf of their respective governments.

The memorandum said both sides stressed the need for maximisation of trade in the existing items. It also emphasised the need for identification of new items of exchange and exploration of new areas of cooperation. Both sides agreed to complete the transactions within a period of two to three years from the date of signing.

After signing, General Atmaja said although Indonesia herslef a food importer, she has decided to help Bangladesh "tide over temporary difficulties". He described the delegations visit as "fruitful" and said trade volume between the two countries will grow in future to the benefit of two friendly countries.

Mr. Mahmood thanked the Indonesian government for responding to Bangladesh's call and hoped this would help in strengthening relations between the two countries.

During 1982-83 Bangladesh imported goods worth over Taka 125 crore from Indonesia which included mostly petroleum products while export to Indonesia was worth Taka 20 crore, which were mostly jute and jute goods.

The delegation which arrived here Sunday, will leave Dhaka today (Wednesday).

CSO: 4600/1093

AMENDMENT REMOVES LOOPHOLES IN DOWRY ACT

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 21 Sep 84 pp 1, 8

[Text] The government has amended the Dowry Prohibition Act 1980 to remove loopholes of the law, reports ENA.

Announcing this at a press conference, Minister for Social Welfare and Women Affairs Dr. Shafia Khatun said the amendment was made following a cabinet decision held on August 12.

She said the government has also ratified the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in the country. The ratification, she said, was made following the adoption of the convention by the United Nations General Assembly on December 18, 1979.

Explaining the Dowry Prohibition act of 1980, Dr Shafis Khatun said if any person gives or takes or abets the giving or taking of dowry, he shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to one year or with fine which may extend to [words illegible].

She said any person, after the commencement of this act, demands dowry directly or indirectly from the parents or guardian of a bride or bridegroom at the time of marriage or at any time or before or after the marriage, he shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to one year or with fine which may extend to five thousand taka or with both.

She further said this dowry does not include dower or mohr in the case of persons to whom the Muslim personal law (shariah) applies.

Referring to ratification of the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, the Social Welfare and Women Affairs Minister said it aims at establishing equal rights for women regardless of their marital status in all fields--political, economic, social, cultural and civil.

She further said the convention sets out in legally binding internationally accepted principles and measures to achieve equal rights for women. She, however, mentioned of the thirty articles of the convention of the General Assembly. Some of the articles, she said, could not be amended as those are detrimental to the Quran and Sunnah.

The Secretary of the Ministry of the Social Welfare and Women Affairs also spoke in the press conference.

BANGLADESH

BRIEFS

NEW SOVIET AMBASSADOR--Mr Vladimir Georgievich Beliaev has been appointed new Soviet Ambassador to Bangladesh it was officially announced in Dhaka on Tuesday night, reports BSS. Mr. Beliaev, 59, would succeed Mr. P. V. Stepanov, who had been Soviet Ambassador in Dhaka since 1976. Born in 1925, Mr. Beliaev joined the diplomatic service in 1955. He was a Counsellor in USSR Embassy in Cyprus from 1971 to 1975. From 1979, he had been the Minister Counsellor of the USSR Embassy in Pakistan. Decorated with orders and medals, Mr. Beliaev is married and has two children. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 3 Oct 84 p 1]

AMBASSADOR TO FINLAND--Helsinki, Oct. 28: The Bangladesh Ambassador, Syed Najmuddin Hashim, presented his credentials to the President of Finland, Dr. Mauno Koivisto at the presidential palace in Helsinki yesterday, reports BSS. The Ambassador conveyed warmest greetings and regards from President H. M. Ershad for President Koivisto and for the friendly and fraternal people of Finland. President Koivisto conveyed his best wishes and regards for President Ershad and for the happiness and prosperity of the people of Bangladesh. During the presentation ceremony and discussions Foreign Minister PaaVo Varynen was also present". [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 29 Oct 84 p 4]

ENVOY TO UNITED STATES--Communication Minister A Z M Obaidullah Khan will be made Bangladesh ambassador to the United States, official sources said in Dhaka on Wednesday, reports ENA. Earlier Energy and Mineral Resources Minister S M Shafiul Azam was named Bangladesh ambassador to the United States. The decision on the appointment of ambassador was revised following what the sources said reluctance of Mr Shafiul Azam to take up the assignment. The name of Mr. Obaidullah Khan as Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States is expected to be announced soon. Mr. Khan is learnt to have accepted the offer. Mr. Khan will replace Mr. Humayun Rashid Chowdhury who was earlier made Adviser on Foreign Affairs and Principal Foreign Secretary. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 20 Sep 84 p 1]

AMBASSADOR TO DPRK--The Government has decided to concurrently accredit Mr K. M. Kaiser, at present Ambassador to China, as Bangladesh Ambassador to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, an official handout said in Dhaka on Tuesday reports BSS. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 17 Oct 84 p 5]

COMMISSIONER TO ZAMBIA--The Government has decided to concurrently accredit Syed Mohammad Hossain, at present High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Zimbabwe, as Bangladesh High Commissioner to Zambia and Ambassador to Mozambique, it was officially announced in Dhaka on Monday reports BSS. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 2 Oct 84 p 3]

NEW SWISS AMBASSADOR--Mr. Jean Cuendet has been appointed Ambassador of Switzerland to Bangladesh with residence in New Delhi, foreign office announced in Dhaka, Wednesday, says BSS. A career diplomat Mr. Cuendet was born in 1929. He has licenciate-at-law of the University of Geneva. Mr. Cuendet, joined federal department of foreign affairs in 1956 and served Swiss embassies in Belgrade, Paris, Peking and Beirut. In 1980 he become Ambassador to Egypt, Somali and Sudan with residence in Cairo. Mr. Jean Cuendet is married. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 27 Sep 84 p 3]

ENVOY TO BURMA--The government have decided to appoint Mr. Mustafizur Rahman as Ambassador of Bangladesh to the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma, reports BSS. [Text] [Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 4 Oct 84 p 8]

ENVOY TO PAPUA NEW GUINEA--The Government has decided to concurrently accredit Maj Gen (Retd) Quazi Golam Dastgir at present High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Australia as Bangladesh High Commissioner to Papua New Guinea reports BSS. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 27 Oct 84 p 8]

CSO: 4600/1121

FORMER MINISTER SAYS POWER SHORTAGE 'RESULT OF CONSPIRACY'

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 21 Nov 84 p 1

[Text] LAHORE, Nov. 20: Dr. Mubashir Hasan, former Finance Minister of Pakistan has said that the shortage of electricity had created a very big problem for the country.

Talking to newsmen, he said that the energy crisis will have such a far-reaching effect that in future no Government would be able to remain in power. He said that as a result of the shortage of energy, no planning in the Sixth Five Year Plan, or outside this Plan, could succeed. He observed that it would have more serious effects than drought.

Dr. Mubashir said that foreign agencies, deliberately did not provide funds for the energy sector. He said that it was a well-planned conspiracy of developed countries to create an energy crisis in the Third World. Dr. Mubashir observed that countries which deal with oil trade did not like Pakistan to become self-sufficient in its energy requirements, as they control the economics of the poor countries through oil.

The former Finance Minister said that self-sufficiency in electricity provided the highroad to industrialisation. He hinted that a big conspiracy had been hatched against Pakistan, as after four years,

there would be only 20 thousand M.W. as against a much higher demand. He said as a result of the shortage of electricity, during the past years, this year's sale of electric goods had been badly affected. He remarked that it was very unfortunate that while the dealers in this trade were losing business, the Government had started a campaign of tax collection in a very ugly way.

He made a few proposals for the stability of the future governments. He suggested that the Government of Pakistan should enforce a law making it compulsory for those organisations which were engaged in the distribution of electricity to purchase electricity from the private sector on the same price which cost them to generate it. He observed that it would be a big step towards achieving self-sufficiency in the energy sector. He said that districts of Mansehra, Swat, Malakand and Chitral, could generate power which could easily meet the requirements of NWFP and Punjab also.

Dr. Mubashir also demanded that under the 1973 Constitution, distribution of electricity should be handed over to the provinces, and the private sector should be allowed to generate electricity. He also urged that the law regarding electricity should be revised.

FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER ADVOCATES ISLAMIC BLOC FOR SECURITY

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 21 Nov 84 p 1

[Article by Aurang Zeb]

[Text] [LAHORE, Nov. 20: Mr. Agha Shahi, former Foreign Minister said that Pakistan was faced with serious security problems, and it was necessary that they should be tackled carefully. He added that while dealing with defence problems, it should have more friendly countries around the world, acquire more defence capabilities and strong internal stability.

He was delivering a lecture on "Security Problems of Pakistan" on Monday afternoon, here under the auspices of the Society for Higher Education. He said that Pakistan right from the time it came into being was faced with serious security problems as India wanted that Pakistan should exist as a subordinate state in the Sub-continent to which Pakistan had never reconciled.

Comparing the military capabilities of Pakistan and India, Agha Shahi said that at present our armed forces do have the ability to counter any attack from India", and it was necessary that these capabilities must be maintained.

Referring to Indo-Pakistan relations, Agha Shahi said that there was hardly any ratio between the present military capabilities of Pakistan and India. He said India was a country with a population of 800 million. Its land, air and naval forces were far bigger than those of Pakistan. He said that

with so much Indian superiority, when Pakistan decided to purchase 40 F-16s India made a big "song and dance". India had many more higher performance aircraft. It also maintained two oceans navy to dominate the sea, and in the event of a war, it could block the oil and arms supplies to Pakistan.

Dealing with Indian power, Mr. Agha Shahi said, India became an atomic power in 1974, and it was believed that it had 50 to 60 atomic weapons. He said in this way Pakistan's security was very complicated. It did not have strategic defence depth, and its communication network of rail and road was located within 20 to 25 miles from the Indian border, and it has further complicated as India and USSR had signed an agreement of strategic co-operation to create a power bloc against America.

Referring to other security problems, he said Pakistan was situated between two rising regional nuclear Super Powers - India and Israel. This danger could be countered by creating an Islamic bloc. He maintained that this bloc could be created through Islamic sentiments and geographic compulsions, but it was very unfortunate that Islamic countries had not realised this danger so far, and they were fighting with each other. He observed that the creation of an Islamic bloc was possible after the end of the Iraq-Iran war as this region had sufficient resources to defend itself.

ELECTION ARRANGEMENTS SAID COMPLETED

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 21 Nov 84 pp 1, 8

[Text]

ISLAMABAD, Nov. 20: The Election Commission of Pakistan has finalised all necessary arrangements for conducting the forthcoming general elections, it was officially learnt here today.

A number of training programmes have been chalked out to train the election staff and officers to be engaged for polling duties.

Effective measures have been taken in hand to maintain law and order situation during the polls. Particular attention will be given for checking the identity of the voters. Every voter will have to show his identity card for this purpose.

According to the official sources, it will be necessary for the polling agent to be the voter of the same polling station.

The Election Commission will be the only competent authority to announce the final results. A communication network for the collection of the election's results will be made available at the disposal of the commission for this purpose.

There would be separate polling stations for female voters to facilitate women observing 'parda' to cast their votes without any fear or hesitation.

The sources said the arrangements have already been finalised to strictly check bogus voters.

A large number of persons attaining the age of 21 years or those who had failed to register their names in the past have got themselves registered as voters and this process is still going on.

Meanwhile in Lahore Ghulam

Jilani Khan, the Governor of Punjab said today that the Government was determined to hold the elections in a very organised and orderly manner.

He made this observation while presiding over a high level meeting which reviewed matters relating to the holding of general elections. Provincial ministers, chief secretary, Provincial election commissioner, DMLA Lahore, Inspector General of Police, divisional commissioners, DIGs and other senior officers were present.

The Governor observed that side by side with training of the polling staff, training of voters should also be taken in hand through mass media. He also emphasised the need to mount a campaign for registration of maximum number of eligible voters.

The meeting discussed in detail organisational and procedural arrangements to ensure a smooth conduct of elections. The provincial Election Commissioner briefed the meeting on the preparation of electoral rolls, delimitation of constituencies, polling staff.

The meeting also discussed the law and order situation in the province particularly in the context of the forthcoming elections and expressed satisfaction over it.)
APP

BUMPER COTTON CROP SAID EXPECTED

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 21 Nov 84 p 6

[Text] KARACHI, Nov. 20: Pakistan's cotton crop during the current season is expected to be of the order of some 4.8 million bales, up from 3.2 million bales in 1976-77 and 4.6 million bales in 1982-83.

Inaugurating a two-day conference on "international cotton marketing and arbitration services of the Liverpool Cotton Association" the Chairman of the Cotton Export Corporation, Mr. Abid Hussain, said cotton production has witnessed "a great upsurge" in recent years except for last year's damage owing to inclement weather and serious pest infestation.

Abid Hussain revealed that a number of schemes have been initiated by the Cotton Export Corporation with the sole purpose of adopting better ginning practices so that the grade of cotton can be further improved. The latest addition to the wide array of schemes is the UNDP-FAO-CEC project for seed-cotton standardisation which tackles the problem of grade right at the farm level. A team of Egyptian experts is presently working on this project.

Since cotton in Pakistan is all hand-picked, he felt, a great deal of improvement is expected in the grade once the scheme goes into full swing.

Abid Hussain observed that the scheme is in the second phase of its operations. He said in 15 ginning factories seed cotton is already being classified on the basis of quality and although it is rather early in the season, indications are that the scheme is working very well and a good number of bales this year would witness a significant im-

provement in grade.

The CEC Chairman urged the Pakistani cotton-men to learn more about LAC bye-laws and services so as to understand better the intricacies of international cotton trading. He also stressed the importance of the seminar in view of fact that the volume of Pakistan's exports has risen as high as 1.8 to two million bales during 1982-83. Export earnings have increased significantly, he added.

The seminar has been jointly organised by the International Cotton Club of Pakistan, the Karachi Cotton Association and the Pakistan Textile Mills Association.

Earlier Bashir H. Ali Mohammed, Vice-Chairman, PTMA said the Karachi Cotton Association too has well established arbitration rules

which have stood the test of time. He expressed the hope that the seminar will help the KCA in streamlining its rules and procedures and in bringing its arbitration services uptodate and in line with the changed circumstances at home and abroad.

This, he felt, would help the exporters as well as our buyers overseas to utilise KCA services in a large measure.

Bashir H. Ali Mohammed further observed "the KCA is our national institution and is legitimately entitled to support from our national exporting agency".

Other speakers included Secretary of the International Cotton Club of Pakistan, S. Ashfaq Ali, and KCA Chairman Zahid Bashir.

The two working sessions today were devoted to functions of the Liverpool Cotton Association and its arbitration services.

PROMINENT POET FAIZ PASSES AWAY

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 21 Nov 84 p 1

[Excerpts] LAHORE, Nov. 20: Mr. Faiz Ahmad Faiz, the renowned Pakistani poet of international repute, died today of a heart attack. He was about 74. His funeral will be taken out from his residence 102-H Model Town on Wednesday at 11.00 a.m.

Mr. Faiz had a heart attack last night while returning from his village Kala Qadir in district Sialkot and was admitted to Mayo Hospital where he breathed his last at 1.00 p.m. today, bringing to a close a glorious chapter in classical Urdu poetry. His journey to Sialkot, taken after long years, the result perhaps of some inner intimation of approaching death, proved to be his last pilgrimage to his native place.

The news of his sad demise spread like wild fire and soon poets, writers, journalists, political workers, film people and many others thronged his residence to offer condolences to the bereaved family.

Faiz is survived by his widow, Alys Faiz, and daughters Salima Hashmi and Muneza Hashmi. Faiz in spite of his old age remained active in public life to the last. He was worried about the health of Punjabi poet Ustad Daaman and had called a meeting at 5.00 p.m. today to raise funds for him.

In 1964, he came back to the country, this time to work in

Karachi as Principal of Abdullah Haroon College and Vice President of Pakistan Arts Council, Karachi.

In 1972, he was asked by the Government of Pakistan to organise its cultural policies and organisations which he did till 1977 by planning and building institutions like Pakistan National Council of the Arts, National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage and other bodies.

He again left the country in 1978 for another self-imposed exile to Beirut where he edited Lotus—the quarterly published by the Association of Afro-Asian Writers. With the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, he was forced by his lovers and admirers amongst the Palestinian fighters to leave.

Seven collections of his poetry had been published running into many editions. His poetry has also been translated into English, French, Russian, Persian, Arabic, Czech, Hungarian, Japanese, Mongolian, Bengali, Hindi, Nepalese and many other languages. His articles, lectures, letters and flaps were collected in book form. Before his death, the poet was planning to record ten lectures on contemporary issues for EMI. His collected works were also expected to be printed in Russian this year.

Though the poet remained a target of sustained attack by his detractors, his contributions to crucial national problems were remarkable. He was dubbed a "pro-Soviet communist" heading and leading "subversive artists" and propagating alien ideologies in an unpatriotic manner. However, it was he who protested against the war imposed upon the country by India with the collaboration of the USSR in 1971. He advised the government regarding war publicity in 1965 and used his influence to improve relations with Bangladesh leading to normalisation with India at Simla in 1973.

BRIEFS

RIVERINE POLICE FOR SIND--Karachi, Nov. 20: A riverine police force is being established for the first time in Sind province to carry out effective operations to combat gangs of dacoits. This was disclosed by the IGP Sind, Agha Saadat Ali Shah, at his first-ever press conference in Karachi today. He said the force will come into being within the next 2-3 weeks and will be provided with twelve bullet-proof boats, each carrying 15 well-armed jawans. If the force's operation proves successful, it will be further expanded, he added. The Sind police chief said there were numerous islets in the River Indus which were being used as hideouts by dacoits. These islets would be frequently raided by the new force to clear them of notorious criminals, he added. He said the riverine force's operation will be supported by land police on both sides of the river, which would check the dacoits escape into the thick jungles. [Text] [Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 21 Nov 84 p 6]

NUR KHAN TO CONTEST ELECTIONS--Karachi, Nov 18: Air Marshal (Retd) M. Nur Khan today confirmed that he intend to contest in the forthcoming 'general elections'. Replying to a question while chatting informally with the newsmen at the Hockey Club of Pakistan Stadium, he said: "Well, I intend to contest and at the moment I could only confirm the news". When asked further the Air Marshal parried away by saying "please wait for the time. I will speak to you in detail when the electioneering starts in the country".--APP [Text] [Karachi DAWN in English 19 Nov 84 p 6]

CLARIFICATION ON MEETING PAGARA--Karachi, Nov 18: Maulana Ehtramul Haq Thanvi returned here on Sunday after visiting Pir Pagara at New Saeedabad in the interior of Sind. In a statement he clarified "certain misunderstandings" which, he said, were likely to arise from a report published in a section of the Press. He said he had met Pir Saheb only to request him to intercede on behalf the four persons sentenced to death in the PIA plane hijacking case. Maulana Thanvi said he had resigned from the chairmanship of defunct PPP (Karachi zone), but remained a member of the party. [Text] [Karachi DAWN in English 19 Nov 84 p 6]

PROFESSORS THREATENED, PROVIDED GUARD--Karachi, Nov 18: Eight professors of JPMC, who had received letters threatening them with death from non-existent "Sind Freedom Movement" a few days ago, have been provided armed police guards at their homes. One of the eight professors had died abroad a few months ago, police said, adding that the threatening letters were typed in English and bore no signature or name, nor did they give any reason for the threat. Police assumed one possible

reason could be the incident when some students, injured in a clash, were taken to the JPMC but were shifted to the Civil Hospital. [Text] [Karachi DAWN in English 19 Nov 84 p 8]

HUNGARY OFFERS ASSISTANCE--Karachi, Nov 18: Hungary has offered to assist Pakistan Steel in the conversion of the existing verifying devices in the Mill into electronic digital ones. The offer followed a visit to the Mill today by a delegation of the Hungarian trade officials led by the Hungarian Ambassador in Pakistan, Dr. Karoly Kovacs. The delegation met the Chairman of the Pakistan Steel, Mr. Haq Nawaz, and exchanged views on the progress of industrialisation in the two countries and the possibilities of improving business relationships between Hungary and Pakistan. It may be added that a Hungarian firm has already supplied equipment to Pakistan Steel like electronic road and railway weigh bridges. [Text] [Karachi DAWN in English 19 Nov 84 Business Supplement P 1]

MINISTER ON HAROON'S EXIT--Islamabad, Nov. 20--The exist of Mr. Mahmood Haroon will in no way affect the working of the Election Coordination Committee of the Cabinet. This was stated here by Lt. General Jamal Said Mian, Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and a member of the Committee. He said the Committee was assigned a specific job of coordination and will continue to perform it. He said he was not aware who would now head the Committee, but since the Committee has recently been enlarged by the inclusion of a member from every province, there was every likelihood that the President may nominate some one from Sind in place of the former Interior Minister. The Committee, he said, has no immediate tour plan but will resume its normal function very soon. Commenting on Mr. Haroon's resignation, he said he was not aware of its background. Mr. Haroon, he said, was a good friend but he alone could explain the reasons for quitting the Cabinet. [Text] [Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 21 Nov 84 p 1]

INDIAN AMBASSADOR SAID RETURNING--Islamabad, Nov. 20: K. D. Sharma, the Indian Ambassador, is returning to Islamabad tomorrow, it was reliably learnt here today. Last week he was called to New Delhi to brief his Prime Minister on the alleged incident occurring during Sikh religious ceremonies earlier this month. His sudden departure to the Indian capital led to wild speculation and a foreign news agency claimed that the Indian government had recalled its ambassador in Pakistan as a protest against the alleged incidents. The sources at the Indian embassy, while confirming the news of his return tomorrow, also informed that after his return, Minister of the Indian Embassy in Pakistan, Shashank, would leave for New Delhi for a brief stay. [Text] [Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 21 Nov 84 p 1]

AID FOR OIL EXPLORATION--Islamabad, Nov. 20: The World Bank assistance for the project of Petroleum Resource Development for 50 million dollars loan were discussed during a meeting between the Minister Incharge for Petroleum and Natural Resources, Dr. Mohammad Asad Khan and seven-member World Bank energy sector loan mission led by Mr. Callisto Madavo here today. It may be recalled that the World Bank has already provided two loans of 81.5 million dollars to Oil and Gas Development Corporation of Pakistan for Toot Petroleum Development project, six exploratory wells and basin study for identifying oil and gas prospective areas in the country. Apprising the World Bank delegation about the OGDC's capabilities, the Minister said that the Corporation has made three discoveries during this year. He said that a number of steps has been taken to speed up the exploration and development work on various projects.--PR [Text] [Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 21 Nov 84 p 8]

ALLEGED CONSPIRATORS ON HUNGER STRIKE--In Pakistan, 31 people accused of conspiracy to overthrow the military government are reported to be on a hunger strike in protest against what they called denial of justice. According to a Pakistani human rights group, the fast started over 5 weeks ago and six of the prisoners are in serious condition. The prisoners, who are held in solitary confinement, are being tried in secret by a military court in Lahore. [Text] [Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1330 GMT 19 Nov 84 BK]

CSO: 4600/97

- END -